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THE LORD'S PRAYER:

AN INTERPRETATION
CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY

BY

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"THE TITLES OF THE PSALMS" "OLD TESTAMENT PROBLEMS"

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PREFACE

THE volume which I now place before the Christian public will, I trust, supply an acknowledged need. Works on the Lord's Prayer are very numerous; but it is difficult to lay hands on such as claim to present an INTERPRETATION of the Prayer.

I have been careful throughout this work to exhibit the Prayer as related to circumstances and conditions that cannot justly be overlooked in practical exposition; and I have endeavoured to "realise" a religious situation which, I trust, will be found to explain important details of the Prayer, even as, in turn, the Prayer as a whole will reflect a Divine light upon the situation itself.

The ecclesiastical relations of the Prayer, though deeply interesting, lie outside the scope of my work. Jewish history and customs, however, have been surveyed with care; and on the quotations from Synagogue forms of devotion, one general observation seems desirable at the outset. It is this: Where the Jews claim high antiquity for their forms, I quote without

offering any challenge; on the other hand, where they admit a comparative recency, I likewise quote without apology. As a fact, the illustrative passages, short or long, as presented in this volume, are given apart from any question of age, simply because they have a common character, and sustain an obvious relation to a common type.

In a word, the traditional liturgy of the Synagogue expresses the genius of Jewish worship. Herein I accept without demur the avowal of the Jews themselves, that they have learned nothing from Christian types of prayer, an avowal which, beyond dispute, places the Synagogue prayers of to-day in direct succession to the forms which were denounced by our Lord, and, further, were expressly set on one side by the Prayer which He taught.

Of the critical questions affecting the origin of the Gospels in which the Prayer occurs, I must also say that they have not come within the scope of my work. At the same time, the fundamental positions maintained in these pages have an obvious bearing upon issues that are thus left on one side. Hence, in so far as I shall be adjudged to "make good" in my work, to that extent I may be reckoned to contribute in some measure to the larger discussion.

I have felt myself compelled to pass by many views and theories, some of them decidedly attractive in character, in order that I might be more free to address myself to a treatment which, as I hold, invests the Prayer with its chief significance as an ordinance of

Christ. While thus engaged in researches that have been somewhat exacting, I have, as it were between whiles, read a large number of expositions, ancient and modern; and from these I have made occasional excerpts by way of practical application of the teaching. These excerpts, I doubt not, will add greatly to the usefulness of my volume.

A personal word may be permitted by way of explaining delay in the appearance of a work which, to the knowledge of many friends, was begun several years ago. It is this: When in part written, I was urged to hasten the completion of the book. Upon this, in due time, I resolved; but the task was so absorbing that I fell a victim to nervous overstrain, which involved years of delay. It was a humiliating experience; but now at length, by the mercy and grace of God, I have been enabled to bring my task to a happy completion.

J. W. T.

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THE LORD'S PRAYER



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

"The Pearl of Prayers"—Why called "The Lord's Prayer"—Simplicity of the Teaching.

IT may safely be affirmed that the Prayer which our Lord taught His disciples is more commonly familiar throughout the lands of Christendom than any other passage of similar length in the entire range of Holy Scripture. Some of us learned the words in infant days as guided by God-fearing parents, or imbibed them unconsciously at "the family altar"; others of us learned them from periodical repetition in meetings for public worship—in church, chapel, or Sunday-school; or, it may be, in some less attractive or less conventional place of Christian assembly, "where prayer was wont to be made." As given in the Book of Common Prayer, the formula reads:¹

¹ In Appendix I., p. 211 ff., the Prayer is given in the original Greek, also in Latin and Hebrew, followed by English Versions and Metrical Forms.

"Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil. Amen."

As found in the Gospel by Matthew (chap. vi.), the Prayer is part of our Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. In the course of warnings against a hypocritical display of good deeds or pious exercises, He adduced examples of abuse in regard to almsgiving (*vv.* 2-4), prayer (5-15), and fasting (16-18). As rendered in the Revised Version (9-13), the Prayer is :

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread [marg. : Gr. *our bread for the coming day*]. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" [marg. : Or, *evil*].

As set out in the Gospel by Luke (chap. xi.), the Prayer is more brief. Belonging to another period of our Lord's ministry, it was there spoken in response to a request by one of His disciples that He would "teach them to pray, even as John also taught his disciples." In this place the Prayer is thus given in the text of the Revised Version (*vv.* 2-4) :

"Father, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins ; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation."

In some ancient manuscripts and authorities (as the margin indicates) there are traces of an endeavour to conform the Prayer in Luke to that found in Matthew. There is no sufficient reason why this should be done. Our Lord gave the Prayer on two occasions—first as to its precise terms, and completely; then as to its chief points, suggestively. Those of the disciples who had received the Prayer into their hearts and minds on the Mount, would easily recall the other particulars. Later on, when considering the immediate motive of the Prayer and the special circumstances in which it was first given, we shall come to understand why the sacred formula took such deep root in the minds of the disciples, and those who afterwards came to believe on Christ through their words.

On grounds that need not be set out in detail, we accept both the forms—the shorter one in Luke as well as the longer one in Matthew. In our judgment the records require little if any harmonisation. The conditions of public instruction, both at the time and since, yield a sufficient explanation of the repetition of the Prayer; and there is no reason to call in critical methods such as would not only weaken the Gospel story, but also fail of rendering service to the cause of interpretation in the true sense of the word.

“The Pearl of Prayers.”

The Pearl of Prayers—for so the Lord's Prayer has been called—has been held in honour from the very first and throughout “all the churches.” East and West have recognised its distinction, and received it as Divinely ordained. The great Latin Father, Tertullian (160–240 *circa*), gave expression to the views of men before and after his day when he wrote:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Lord prescribed a new form of prayer for the disciples of the New Testament. Though John had taught his disciples a form, yet he did this only as a forerunner of Christ, so that when Christ was increased ["He must increase, but I must decrease"] then the work of the servant must pass over to the Lord. Thus the prayer of John is lost, while that of our Lord remains, to show that earthly things must give way to heavenly (*De Oratione*, i.).

Let us also hear Cyprian, bishop and martyr (200–258 *circa*), who discoursed on the same sublime subject :

Let the Father recognise the words of the Son when we offer up our prayer ; let Him who dwells in our breast, dwell also in our voice ; and seeing we have Him, when we sin, for "an Advocate with the Father," let us put forward the words of our Advocate when as sinners we make petition for our offences (*De Oratione Domini*, i.).

Such ecclesiastical designations of the Prayer as have come down to us are richly suggestive. On the one hand, it has been called *Oratio quotidiana*, the daily or common prayer ; on the other, *Oratio legitima*, the established prayer, or that which has the force of an ordinance ; again, *Oratio fidelium*, the prayer of the faithful, *i.e.* of believers, their privilege and their birthright. The last-mentioned illustrates the old-time conviction (and surely not confined to the old time) that only the regenerate have a title to address God in the words, "Our Father."

Why called "The Lord's Prayer."

Throughout the ages, moreover, the Prayer has been called THE LORD'S PRAYER—not, assuredly, by way of suggesting that our Lord was accustomed to use

such terms when addressing the Father; but rather because it is the Prayer which He TAUGHT to His disciples. Rabbis had given prayers; John the Baptist had exercised a like authority as a teacher in Israel; and now the Lord provides a Prayer for those who follow Him. In the nature of things, this is designated THE LORD'S PRAYER—named after the Giver.

The great High-Priestly Prayer, set forth in John xvii., was never named "The Lord's Prayer"; it was an act of personal devotion, and not an ordinance given to others. Here, however, in the Prayer which our Lord taught His disciples, we have an ordinance, an institution, a body of instruction, which must in some way be distinguished, not only from the Master's individual utterances, but also from all other formulæ of a like character. To speak of the words as "The Disciples' Prayer" is to shift the emphasis. We must recognise the Giver rather than the receiver, the Teacher rather than the learner; and the judgment of generations, from the Apostolic age until now, is enshrined in the familiar designation, "THE LORD'S PRAYER."

We shall see, in later chapters, something of the implication of the Prayer to the first disciples—the privilege and duty which it proclaimed, the protest and warning which it suggested. Suffice it for the present to remark that, what the *Shema*¹ is in the Jewish liturgy, and has been for upwards of two thousand years, that the *Paternoster* has been to Christians in every age of the Church. Regarding it as the foundation upon which other prayers should be built,

¹ "Hear, O Israel," an oft-repeated creedal formula, made up of three passages from the Pentateuch—Deut. vi. 4-9, xi. 13-21; Num. xv. 37-41. For a succinct statement of the importance of the *Shema* in the Jewish liturgy, with directions for further study, see Schürer's JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE TIME OF JESUS CHRIST, Eng. tr., Div. 2, vol. ii. p. 84 f.

as Tertullian said, they have **BEGUN** with it in public worship. Again, looking upon it as the perfection of all prayers, as Augustine said, they have **CONCLUDED** their daily services with the same blessed words. Hence a jealousy, which none should disparage, to approach the Father in the words of the Son.

On the other hand, many have regarded the Prayer as a directory suggestive of the range and scope of devotion, rather than as a form intended for continual use. Those who understand the Prayer in that sense find in its clauses an ever-timely expression of human desire in regard to things temporal and spiritual, and of devotion to the Higher Will when subdued under a sense of the greatness and goodness of God, and the relation of the redeemed to His Kingdom, ever coming, and altogether glorious in its assured consummation. So while, with some, "after this manner" means *in these words*, with others the formula means *according to this pattern*. In no case, however, should we forget that, when giving the Prayer in the second instance, our Lord said, "When ye pray, SAY . . ."

Simplicity of the Teaching.

The simplicity of our Lord's general teaching is a marked characteristic of the Prayer. Though, in some details, the language may have puzzled Western expositors, there is every reason to believe that it presented no difficulty to the men in whose hearing the words were originally spoken. As the Revealer of the Father, the Lord Jesus was unique. Though independent of His age in regard to the principles of His instruction, none the less was He emphatically "at home" with that parabolic method which prevailed among the Jews of Palestine in the time of His public ministry ;

and He also turned to account such forms of speech as were familiar and commonly approved and understood. We shall find that the terms of the Prayer supply no contradiction of this general statement.

At the base of all Jewish worship lies the Old Testament—the language and the ideas; and we must not forget this fact in our study of the various clauses of the Prayer. Yet, as the spirit of the New Testament shows an advance upon the Old—easily discernible in the Sermon on the Mount, in the midst of which we now find ourselves—so the Lord's Prayer, as a body of spiritual instruction, transcends Old Testament conceptions. Unlike the great ones of the earth, the Master employed no loud, swelling words. Rather, He employed expressions that were quite commonly used; and with these He provided an instrument of adoration which no subsequent teacher or loyal disciple has ventured to imitate. To men who desired to approach God in prayer He gave an acceptable medium; He answered their implied HOW? by providing a concrete example of adoring supplication. They said, "Teach us to pray." He taught them A PRAYER.

The Decalogue, under the correcting influence of which the nation of Israel was developed, was given TWICE. So also was the Lord's Prayer, the abiding monument of Christ's teaching as the Revealer of the Father; it was given on "the mountain" during the Galilean ministry, and repeated in "a certain place" before the opening of the Peræan ministry. Having been TWICE given, the Prayer demands our special attention.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF CIRCUMSTANCES

The Disciples were Men of Prayer—Full Prayers and “Fountain” Prayers—Christ as Rabbi—The Forerunner and his Teaching—“Teach us to Pray”—Degeneration in Prayer.

WHEN giving the Prayer, our Lord placed before His disciples teaching that was either to draw them into closest fellowship with Himself, or once and for ever to repel them from His company. In other words, the promulgation of the Prayer was an event of peculiar importance in our Lord's public ministry. Hereby He was manifesting a gracious regard for the needs of those who were looking up to Him as a Teacher in Israel ; and, moreover, He was responding to the primary expectations of such as were disposed to admit His Messianic claims. To make this clear, we proceed to inquire into the circumstances that attended the giving of the Prayer.

Those who examine the formula by itself, without reference to the historical situation in which it originated, are in danger of losing sight of the very facts which invest the Prayer with its deepest meaning. The Master's actions disclose motive and purpose, and

we do well to look for the practical bearings of His words and deeds. First, then, we must consider the life-habits of the men who were thus taught to pray; and, secondly, we must inquire into the peculiar conditions that demanded the instruction which was actually given by our Lord.

The Disciples were Men of Prayer.

In the first place, note that the men whom Christ chose as His disciples were already men of prayer. Whatever their deficiencies, they were not benighted pagans, or men that neither knew nor worshipped the God of heaven. No; they were men whose life, in a large proportion of its time and activities, was given up to worship. In the services of Temple and Synagogue every act was esteemed to be one of prayer; and the Rabbis had, in a variety of ways, provided for the home-life of the people—ordaining benedictions and supplications, praises and petitions. Evening and morning and at noonday, with the Psalmist (Ps. lv. 17); three times a day with Daniel (Dan. vi. 10); rising and lying down, before and after meals—in every act and exercise of life, whether in joy or sorrow, in duty or pleasure, the Jew was encouraged to delight himself in JEHOVAH, and thus to maintain a continual disposition for prayer. The worshipper's conceptions of prayer may have been faulty, and his ideals may have been low; but, nevertheless, the lives of the men whom Christ called to be His followers had, from childhood, been hedged about with acts of adoration in which prayer occupied a principal place.

Not only is it true that these men had been brought up under well-defined religious influences: we shall do well to observe that, in His general teaching, our Lord

clearly recognised the fact. Here, in the Sermon on the Mount, He says, once and again: "When thou prayest" (Matt. vi. 5, 6); and, assuming the habitual disposition of His disciples towards prayer, He instructed them to "pray for them that persecuted them" (chap. v. 44). Clearly, then, the object of the Lord's Prayer was not to teach prayer in the abstract, but rather to correct false notions regarding communion with God, and to advance the disciples in a knowledge of THE FATHER as revealed by THE SON. As we shall see, the Lord aimed at delivering His followers from dangers that were common in the religious life of the Jews; and, accordingly, after administering timely cautions, he gives them the positive instruction which is embodied in the Prayer.

Full Prayers and "Fountain" Prayers.

In the second place, note that in Rabbinical usage provision was made for the case of students and others whose duties prevented them from attending the regular services of Temple and Synagogue. As is well known, the Jewish liturgy was highly developed in the time of Christ, and included important elements that survive to this day.¹ For instance, the service known

¹ Israel Abrahams summarises the facts, showing that, whereas the *Shema* ("Hear, O Israel") and the Ten Commandments were recited daily in the Temple, the Eighteen (or nineteen) Benedictions, known as *Tephillah* (lit. "Prayer"), were, in so far as regards the first three and the last three paragraphs, composed in pre-Maccabean times. In brief: "The Jewish liturgy grew up while the Second Temple still stood. There is no doubt but that the Synagogue system must have been established, at home as well as in the Diaspora, soon after the return from the Babylonian exile" (ANNOTATED EDITION OF AUTHORISED DAILY PRAYER BOOK, 1914, p. iii). See also Solomon Schechter, SOME ASPECTS OF RABBINIC THEOLOGY, 1909, p. 11; and the JEWISH ENCYCLOPÆDIA, vol. viii., s.v. "Liturgy."

as the Eighteen Benedictions (*Shemoneh-Esreh*), with frequent repetitions of the *Shema'* ("Hear, O Israel"), was rehearsed with variations morning, afternoon, and evening, in private as well as in public. Needless to say, this was a tax upon the time of many who were fully disposed to worship; and business, no less than religious exercise, has its proper claims. Accordingly, in place of the Benedictions as a whole, the Rabbis had authorised a summary, or epitome, to meet the needs of special classes and occasions, and likewise to meet the capacities of the weak. The circumstances of young men engaged in study were particularly considered; for such there were SHORT PRAYERS, the rehearsal of which was reckoned as an honourable discharge of the obligation which the longer prayers imposed upon those who attended public worship.

Thus, in the time of Christ, among the Jews of Palestine, there were prayers *and* prayers: there were those that were full and regular, and there were those that were brief or summary in form; and both were proper as having been duly sanctioned by the Rabbis. The brief, or summary, form was called a מַעְיָן (*ma'yān*), or "Fountain"; and those who could not pray the prescribed prayer in its fullness were expected to pray the "Fountain." Important sections of the liturgy were thus presented in two forms; and—what is specially to our purpose to notice with care—it was the recognised habit of teachers to give forth short prayers for the use of their students, or followers, not with the object of superseding the longer forms, but rather in order to express the force and substance of the same in few words, thus providing "Fountains" for special classes and exceptional circumstances. Said Rabbi Akiba: "If prayer be free in a man's mouth, let him pray the

Eighteen ; but if not, let him pray the Fountain of the Eighteen.”¹

Christ as Rabbi.

What Judæan Rabbis were to their scholars, such also was Christ to His disciples. Though not of the Rabbinical schools—“How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?”—yet He was a Teacher whose words excited astonishment even as His deeds caused men to marvel. He forbade His disciples to claim the title of Rabbi, and, with a Messianic consciousness, He said: “One is your Teacher, and all ye are brethren.” In the language of Nicodemus, He was “a Teacher come from God”; and when He said “Follow Me,” there were honest men who responded with readiness: “they left all and followed Him.” As other Rabbis provided for their disciples prayers which, when reverently recited, excused from attendance at public worship, so Jesus of Nazareth, irregular Rabbi though He was deemed to be, gave to the men who followed Him a summary or “Fountain” prayer, one which, in the first place, would dispense them from Synagogue obligations, and, in the second place, would implant in their breasts truths regarding God and His purposes such as would in due time render Synagogue worship no longer agreeable to them.

As testifying to the commanding authority shown by our Lord as a Teacher among His people, this act has a deep significance. Those who would suggest that, in the early part of His career, Christ had no intention to leave the beaten track of Judaism, have to account, not only for the act, but also for the Prayer

¹ See the references in Lightfoot's EXERCITATIONS UPON ST. MATTHEW, Pitman's edition of Works, vol. xi. p. 141 ff.

itself—a formula so remarkable in its implication, so epoch-making in its influence, as we shall show in due course.¹

There was another reason behind this gracious act of our Lord. The distinctive nature of His teaching had made some such measure inevitable. Looking at the events of His ministry in their more precise order, as set out in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, we observe that, before the arrival of the time when the Prayer was given, much had taken place that could not but render the position of the disciples intolerable on the old lines of life. By many mighty works on the part of our Lord, those who had obeyed His call became confirmed in their allegiance, and onlookers were compelled in amazement to glorify God, saying: "We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark ii. 12). Moreover, while the fame of the Master spread in various directions, the Scribes and Pharisees had begun a course of opposition that must have told in some degree upon the minds of the unlettered men from Galilee.

The Forerunner and his Teaching.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the circumstances in which John the Baptist taught his disciples

¹ A *Rabbi* was a Teacher (*Didaskalos*), as St. John explains (John i. 38). Christ was such; for He said to His disciples: "One is your Teacher" (Matt. xxiii. 8). Moreover, Nicodemus, addressing Him as *Rabbi*, said: "Thou art a Teacher come from God" (John iii. 2). In regard to our Lord, the disciples employed not only the Greek equivalents, but also the title *Rabbi* (Matt. xxvi. 25, 49; Mark ix. 5, xi. 21; John i. 38, 49, iv. 31, ix. 2, xi. 8), and other speakers did the same (John iii. 2, vi. 25). The designation was obviously approved, for our Lord said: "Ye call Me Teacher and Lord: and ye do well; for so I am" (John xiii. 13; also Matt. xxiii. 8). The Aramaic *Rabboni*, less conventional than *Rabbi*, and possibly Galilean, had a like meaning—see John xx. 16 (R.V. *marg.*) and Mark x. 51.

to pray were in some respects quite similar. Under daily instruction, the followers of the Forerunner could not fail to find themselves alienated from the customary worship of the Synagogue. Moreover, as their master denounced classes that were welcome in the most religious circles, and condemned practices which the spiritual leaders condoned (Matt. iii. 7-12; Luke iii. 1-14), the disciples of John could not but feel themselves crowded out of the ordinary assemblies, and realise a measure of solitariness in the culture of the spiritual life. In conditions such as these, John taught his disciples to pray—taught them A PRAYER.

Though similar, however, the circumstances were not identical. Christ's disciples were called upon to occupy ground in advance of that taken by John and his disciples. The Forerunner, it will be noted, "fasted often and made supplications," and his followers did the same (Luke v. 33; cf. ii. 37). The Son of Man "came eating and drinking," and His disciples followed His example (Matt. xi. 19; cf. ix. 10). Hence it may be presumed that John's prayer would be more in harmony with legal ideas and practices than is that which was given forth by our Lord. We need not, however, on this account conclude, with some, that the disciple who said, "Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (Luke xi. 1), was dissatisfied with the "Our Father," as previously given, and therefore desired a form of prayer more on the lines of the dominant Judaism! *The request was, not for a prayer like John's, but for such consideration in regard to prayer as John had shown to his disciples.*

It is remarkable, however, that, whatever may have lain behind the request, our Lord simply repeated, as to its point and substance, the Prayer which He had

already given. He came to reveal the Father, and He taught the "Our Father." Thus, in one form of approach to the Throne of Grace, and in one only, the disciples were bound to their beloved Master and to each other.

"Teach us to Pray."

Why was request made for instruction in regard to prayer, as we read in Luke xi., seeing that the Great Teacher had already given the OUR FATHER? In the first place, the question may have been asked by a newly-enrolled follower, or by one who was absent when the Sermon on the Mount was spoken. In the second place—and this is more to the point—we do well to recognise the essential characteristics of collective teaching. Is it, indeed, surprising that the request should have been made? Is not inquiry the proper part of the disciple? Again, is it surprising that the Master should have repeated His instruction? Is not that the way with serious teachers? The diligent scholar is always asking questions, and the practical teacher is always repeating his lesson. Therefore, the fact that the Lord's Prayer was given twice is not astonishing. Rather, should we not have expected such an important lesson to be given more than once?

Further, what are we to understand by the words, "Lord, teach us to pray"? From what we have seen of the life-habits of the people and the customs of the time, it appears obvious that the request was for a form of prayer such as students or disciples were in the habit of receiving from their Rabbis. Those whom Christ had chosen were men of prayer, as the Jews were accustomed to pray; they knew the joys of

worship both in the house of God and in the home circle. We find them, however, appointed to a new service which would occupy all their time; they were to be WITH HIM or to be SENT FORTH TO PREACH, just as He might command (Mark iii. 14). They would, as disciples of Christ, be journeying throughout the land; hence attendance at the Synagogue would be altogether out of the question. They made a simple request, and the Lord's response was equally explicit. He taught them A PRAYER; and whereas originally He had said, "After this manner pray ye," now He prefaced the words with the injunction: "When ye pray, SAY . . ."

Must we not admit that our Lord's reply is the best comment on the meaning of the request? The practice of the time also renders further discussion of the point unnecessary. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, when asking their Rabbis to provide them with an "epitome" prayer, scholars in those days would say: "Teach us to pray"—*i.e.* "Teach us a prayer that shall dispense us from Synagogue attendance." Certain it is that the Talmud contains many prayers which Rabbis gave forth to their followers; and though those which have come down to us are of a later date than the Lord's Prayer, yet, as owing their origin to an old-established custom, they may be regarded as in the succession of others that have not survived in literature.

Degeneration in Prayer.

It is well here to explain that the Jewish ideal in prayer was of a composition precise in terms and neatly balanced. In the Old Testament we find much about prayer, even in places where the term itself is

not used. Whether veiled in such expressions as "appearing before God," "spreading forth the hands," "crying unto Jehovah," or implied in descriptions of various forms of worship, there can be no doubt that, from the earliest times, when men "called upon the Name of the Lord," and "walked with God," prayer was the resource and joy of those who made Jehovah their trust. Many of the Psalms are prayers—some of them being so classified (Ps. li.—lxxii. ; see Ps. lxxii. 20), and others being so described (see titles of Ps. xvii., lxxxvi., xc., cii., cxlii. ; see also Ps. liv. 2, lv. 1, lxi. 1). Moreover, there are in the Old Testament records, as more generally designated, numerous prayers, long and short, some in stately prose (*e.g.* Ex. xxxiii. 12–16; Num. xxvii. 15–17; Deut. ix. 26–29; 2 Sam. vii. 18–29; 1 Kings iii. 6–9, viii. 22–53; 2 Kings xix. 15–19; Ezra ix. 5–15; Dan. ix. 4–19), and others more definitely poetical in structure (*e.g.* 1 Sam. ii. 1–10; Isa. xxxviii. 9–20). Thus God was known as the "Hearer of Prayer" (Ps. lxxv. 2), and the Temple as a "House of Prayer" (Isa. lvi. 7).

In the Babylonian captivity, also in the Greek and Roman periods, the customs of the people of Israel in regard to prayer underwent important "developments." Contact with the surrounding nations resulted in practices such as involved the hypocrisy which our Lord denounced in the Sermon on the Mount. The degeneration was inward as well as outward; and it would seem that a vain prolixity in prayer was the fashion in the days when, with the OUR FATHER—precise and compact, simple and unaffected—our Lord taught His disciples "a more excellent way."

CHAPTER III

HYPOCRITES AND GENTILES

The Prayer a Safeguard against Impiety—Heathen Conceptions of Prayer—Two Views of Hypocrisy—Christ's Rule of Prayer—"Vain Repetitions" in the Synagogue—"Much Speaking" dishonouring to God.

WE have already explained, though all too briefly, the circumstances in which the Lord's Prayer was given. Now we proceed to consider more particularly the reasons for the promulgation of the Prayer. Having dealt in some degree with the HOW, we address ourselves to the WHY.

The fundamental reasons for giving the Prayer were two: First, as the context in St. Matthew proclaims, the Prayer was a warning and a protest (chap. vi. *vv.* 5-8); and second, as the basal terms of the formula bear witness, it was the evident design of our Lord by its means to make some new revelation of the goodness and grace of the Heavenly Father. The latter aspect, which is singularly attractive, must be left for the present; it will be demonstrated as, clause by clause, the Prayer is interpreted and explained. The former aspect, however, may receive immediate atten-

tion. If, as we have intimated, the Jewish people had copied the Gentiles in the matter of prayer, it will not be difficult to show that, as a consequence, they were addicted to practices which were dishonouring to God. That they were actually so addicted, is our present contention.

The Prayer a Safeguard against Impiety.

If the disciples are to enjoy communion with God—such true communion as it was the purpose of our Lord to establish—then they must first be delivered from false ideas as to prayer, and be taught how to pray acceptably, or in a manner at once recognising man's deep need and God's abounding grace. On these points the Jewish mind was sadly in need of enlightenment. Hence, when teaching His disciples how to pray, our Lord dealt, not only with the matter, but also with the manner; and obviously His *οὕτως*, "after this manner," or style, implied a condemnation of another manner, or style, that was familiar to His hearers. In other words, by the act of giving the Prayer, Christ safeguarded His followers against practices that were essentially vain and frequently impious. This is plainly shown by the account given in St. Matthew's Gospel of the original enunciation of the Prayer.

With Jews and Gentiles alike it was the custom, in the East, in the time of our Lord, to make long prayers—to multiply words in formal devotions. The Pharisees, with the object of being "seen of men," cultivated pietistic display. Their prayers were many, and they were long (cf. Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47); and it would seem that observers as well as devotees had their imaginations held by the externals of such

exercises. The teaching of the Rabbis kept the worshippers in the bondage of error on this subject, their dictum being, "He that prays much is certain to be heard"; and again (to give terse expression to a popular proverb) they had said: "Prolix prayer prolongeth life." Accordingly, worship became mechanical and lifeless, an insincere pretence, a ritualistic performance. The Pharisees found an occupation in such formalism, with the result that their lives were barren and unfruitful, and they laid themselves open to the charge of neglecting the weightier matters of "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God."

Heathen Conceptions of Prayer.

With the uninstructed Gentiles it was much the same as with the punctilious Pharisees. Their prayers were many and long, but without any suggestion of being a means of heart-communion with the God of heaven. In fact, their prayers were passionate appeals to gods that made no answer. Holy Scripture affords us glimpses of such devotions as they entered into the education or came under the observation of the people of Israel, and indeed, to a serious extent, had been copied by them in the generation in which our Lord's public ministry was placed. One recalls immediately the course followed by the worshippers of Baal, in the time of Elijah the prophet: they shouted FROM MORNING EVEN UNTIL NOON, "O Baal, hear us"; but there was no voice, nor any that answered (1 Kings xviii. 26). Also one recalls the incident of the fanatical Ephesians on the occasion of Paul's missionary visit, when, in praise of their goddess, with one voice, ABOUT THE SPACE OF TWO HOURS, they cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians"

(Acts xix. 34). Though their divinities gave no response, it was the way of the heathen to continue their appeals in the senseless manner thus indicated. By repetition, fierce and long sustained, they acted out the belief that their gods could not hear, or would not do so unless, with importunate fervour, the same thing was shouted many times!

The practice thus indicated was the natural out-working of heathen ideas of prayer. On the one hand, the gods were regarded as opposed to the petitioners; on the other hand, it was deemed to be the business of the petitioners to weary the gods into a granting of their requests. Terence satirises the practice (in *Heaut.*, Act v. sc. 2) to the following effect:

Nay, prithee, good wife, cease to stun the gods
With thanking them that you have found your daughter;
Unless you fancy they are like yourself,
And think they cannot understand a thing
Unless said o'er and o'er a hundred times.¹

These degrading conceptions prevailed in the Roman Empire in the time of Christ. Accordingly, when earthly powers were approached with some public request, it was in the same manner of appeal, as the following illustrative passages show:

Let the parricide be dragged, we beseech thee, Augustus.
Let the parricide be dragged. This is the thing we ask—Let the parricide be dragged!

Hear us, Cæsar, let the false accusers be condemned to the lion. Hear us, Cæsar, let the false accusers be condemned to the lion. Hear us, Cæsar, let the false accusers be condemned to the lion. Hear us, Cæsar, etc.

Antoninus, the pious, the gods keep thee. Antoninus, the

¹ Millington: TESTIMONY OF THE HEATHEN TO THE TRUTHS OF HOLY WRIT, p. 474.

merciful, the gods keep thee. Antoninus, the merciful, the gods keep thee.¹

Two Views of Hypocrisy.

It will be observed that, in presenting His memorable instruction, our Lord classes Jews and Gentiles together. In the matter of prayer both came under a like condemnation. In the judgment of the Jew, the benighted Gentiles were "hypocrites": they were actors, and so called, not because they did not act up to their light, but rather because the light that was in them was darkness. As a fact, the Jews spoke of the heathen as "hypocrites," because their gods were false, and their worship was a mere flattery of wood and stone, in practices that had not been ordained by the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth. To such an extent, however, had the nation of Israel become indoctrinated with a like foolishness and impiety, that their religious exercises, "using vain repetitions as the Gentiles do," had become equally absurd and unreasonable. The people had left the ways of God, and so our Lord classes their religious leaders with the heathen, or Gentiles, calling them in like manner "hypocrites."²

Hence, when our Lord said: "After this manner therefore pray ye," He was suggesting a contrast as well as indicating an acceptable style of prayer. To pray, as the Pharisees did, "for a pretence," that men might applaud, and thus in a spirit of pride and haughtiness, was impious; and over against such a

¹ See also other references in Lightfoot's *WORKS*, Pitman's edition, vol. xi. pp. 139, 140.

² The Old Testament expression is *hānēph*, a godless one, hence profane, from a root meaning to pollute or defile.

practice our Lord gave this command to His followers : " When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret," *i.e.* pray in private, to the unseen though Faithful Creator (*v.* 6). Again, to pray with "much speaking"—implying on the part of the Deity an indifference that had to be argued with, induced, and persuaded to be good and kind—was a practice which our Lord not only condemned, but once and for ever set aside when He said : "YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS YE HAVE NEED OF, BEFORE YE ASK HIM" (*v.* 8).

Christ's Rule of Prayer.

The old practice now denounced and the new teaching so graciously given yield two distinct conceptions of God—conceptions divided by a great gulf of difference. The one view dealt with a reluctant Deity, who had to be aroused and urged to a disposition of sympathy, not to say of mercy ; while the other had to do with a Heavenly Father, all-knowing and all-providing, as well as deserving of complete confidence and trust on the part of those who seek His favour. Accordingly, it was over against a practice which prevailed among Jews and Gentiles alike—a practice exhibiting an essential distrust of God—that our Lord placed another rule of prayer ; and that, in a word, was the rule of simple and direct address to the Heavenly Father, expressed in terms that are plain, pointed, and practical. The οὕτως (*houtōs*, "after this manner"—THUS) is set over against ὥσπερ οἱ ἐθνικοί (*hōsper hoi ethnikoi*, "as the Gentiles"—like the heathen). Thus did the Great Teacher protest against, set at nought, and abolish once and for all,

in the circle of His followers, a liturgical style which, though the growth of generations, was *after the manner of the Gentiles*. His "pray **THUS**" carried with it a condemnation of *the other manner*; and accordingly the "Fountain," **OUR FATHER**, superseded an ocean of "vain repetitions" in Jewish forms of devotion.

We pause for a moment to consider how great is the privilege of being in the school of the Master who gave the **OUR FATHER**. Whether brought up among Jews or Gentiles, the one who learns this Prayer has at command the secret of true fellowship with God. What a blessing to have been trained in a home where the sweet words became part of infant habit, and are held to be increasingly precious as the years go by! Such a one grows up to distinguish, as by a divine intuition, between the simplicity that is in Christ and theories and practices of prayer that distress and disappoint the spiritual mind. In the words of the late Dr. Stanford:

If Christ had left for our pathway of praying-language words of passion or utterances of sublime expression, true only in moments of rare light or exaltation—**THAT** sometimes would not have been true prayer for us, for it would not have fitted our average life; but **THIS** always fits us. It fits every mood and stage of our soul's history; it fits us when our wants are few, when our pulsations are quiet, when our thoughts are level; it fits us when we are just beginning and when we are just ending our journey. So, when I am but a very young child of the Most High, the moments of weakness will be rare indeed when I cannot speak this language, and be stronger for it; but if I have just come down from the third heaven, feeling that henceforth I shall *be* more than I ever yet have been, all the life of my soul rides out in these words, and by this expression that life gets to be more strong, rapid, and victorious.¹

¹ **THE LORD'S PRAYER**, p. 43.

“Vain Repetitions” in the Synagogue.

Did Israel copy the ways of the Gentiles in vain repetition? Indeed yes, and our Lord's accusation stands justified by Synagogue prayers which, as memorised in early times, were passed on from generation to generation, and are to-day presented in the Service Books used by the Jewish people. Leaving for a later chapter details of a method of prayer which for ages has found favour in the worship of the Jews, we give specimens of two prayers for mercy and forgiveness as they appear in the Evening Service of the Day of Atonement. For sins of every form and hue pardon has already been sought in pages of petitions, and now the Almighty is (in the Hebrew language, of course) approached in these terms:¹

God of Mercy is Thy Name! God of Grace is Thy Name! Upon us has Thy Name been called. O Lord, do Thou it for Thy Name's sake; do it for Thy truth's sake; do it for the sake of Thy Covenant; do it for the sake of Thy greatness and Thy majesty; do it for the sake of Thy Law; do it for the sake of Thine honour; do it for the sake of Thy pledges; do it for the sake of Thy memorial; do it for the sake of Thy lovingkindness; do it for the sake of Thy goodness; do it for the sake of Thy Unity; do it for the sake of Thy glory; do it for the sake of Thy doctrine; do it for the sake of Thy kingdom; do it for the sake of Thy splendour; do it for the sake of Thy mystery; do it for the sake of Thy strength; do it for the sake of Thine excellence; do it for the sake of Thy righteousness; do it for the sake of Thy holiness; do it for the sake of Thine abundant mercy; do it for the sake of Thy Shekinah; do it for the sake of Thy praise.

Do it for the sake of those who love Thee, asleep in the

¹ As found in the Service Books of the more numerous section of the people, known as the Ashkenazim, or German-Polish Jews.

dust ; do it for the sake of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; do it for the sake of Moses and Aaron ; do it for the sake of David and Solomon ; do it for the sake of Jerusalem Thy holy city ; do it for the sake of Zion, the tabernacle of Thy glory ; do it for the sake of the desolations of Thy temple ; do it for the sake of the ruins of Thine altar ; do it for the sake of the blood of Thy servants which hath been poured forth ; do it for the sake of those who have been slain for Thy holy Name ; do it for the sake of those who have been slaughtered for Thy Unity ; do it for the sake of those who went through fire and through water for the sanctification of Thy Name ; do it for the sake of infants in the school-house ; do it for the sake of babies at the breast who have not sinned ; do it for the sake of weanlings from the milk who have not transgressed ; do it for the sake of orphans and widows. Do Thou it for Thine own sake, if not for ours ; do it for Thine own sake, and save us.

Answer us, O Lord, answer us. Answer us, O our God, answer us. Answer us, O our Father, answer us. Answer us, O our Creator, answer us. Answer us, O our Redeemer, answer us. Answer us, O Thou that seekest us, answer us. Answer us, O thou faithful God, answer us. Answer us, Thou that art perfect and kind, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art pure and upright, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art ever-existing, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art good and beneficent, answer us. Answer us, Thou who knowest our frailty, answer us. Answer us, Thou who suppresses anger, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art robed in righteousness, answer us. Answer us, O Supreme King of kings, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art awful and exalted, answer us. Answer us, Thou who forgivest and parest, answer us. Answer us, Thou who answerest in a favourable time, answer us. Answer us, Thou Redeemer and Deliverer, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art just and upright, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art near to all who call upon Thee, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art merciful and gracious, answer us. Answer us, Thou who hearkenest unto the needy, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art the support of the perfect, answer us.

Answer us, O God of our fathers, answer us. Answer us, O God of Abraham, answer us. Answer us, O Fear of Isaac, answer us. Answer us, O Mighty One of Jacob, answer us. Answer us, Thou Refuge of our mothers, answer us. Answer us, Thou Help of the tribes, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art slow to anger, answer us. Answer us, Thou who art easily reconciled, answer us. Answer us, Thou who answerest in time of adversity, answer us. Answer us, Thou Father of orphans, answer us. Answer us, Thou Judge of widows, answer us.

And so on, more and more, with studied repetition, and most assuredly "as the Gentiles do." These forms succeed others in which sin is defined with a comprehensiveness that can hardly exclude any imaginable form of offence against God, and forgiveness is sought in terms of appeal of corresponding variety. Yet even here we have "do it for the sake of" forty times, followed by "answer us" nearly seventy times repeated. And as were the petitions that preceded, so are those that follow—it is repetition, "vain repetition," on the part of men who show, as plainly as words can demonstrate, that "they think they shall be heard for their much speaking." The antiquity of the compositions just quoted—whether positive or comparative—is not a question calling for discussion; the prayers are unquestionably from forms that are well known to have been guarded with passionate jealousy throughout many generations, AND THEY ARE TYPICAL OF THE LITURGY OF THE NATION.

"Much Speaking" dishonouring to God.

In the light of Christ's teaching, such prayers as come into the class of "vain repetitions" and "much speaking" cannot but be regarded as DISHONOURING

TO GOD. They imply inattention, hostility, and much besides, on the part of the Divine Being. To ask for pardon for sin is, of course, to make a request with which God is well pleased. Then why repeat the request again and again, multiplying reasons that can have no influence with a merciful, just, and holy God? Again, if God is, in deed and truth, the Hearer of Prayer, why say, scores of times repeated, "Answer us, answer us," in a manner implying unbelief and distrust? Such petitions, if carefully examined, suggest an impression on the part of the worshipper that God is holding aloof; and again they show, equally on the part of the suppliant, a determination, by insistence of appeal, to conquer the supposed aloofness. And can it be denied that such acts of dishonour towards the Most High are degrading to the worshipper who perpetrates them?

There is another feature of the prayers here reproduced from the liturgy of the Synagogue. They are constructed on the well-known system of alphabetical acrostic. In the first paragraph just given, this feature runs from the fifth clause, "for Thy truth's sake," to the end, "for the sake of Thy praise"; in the third, it begins in the third clause, "O our Father," and finishes in "the support of the perfect." That is to say, the distinguishing words of the successive clauses are such as begin with letters that exhibit the alphabet in due order. The device is very old, and in all probability many of the liturgical compositions of that character which are in use to-day were rehearsed in the synagogues of Palestine in the days of our Lord.

We proceed to a further explanation of the "vain repetitions" which, as already suggested, the Lord's Prayer was given to counteract and supersede.

CHAPTER IV

"VAIN REPETITIONS"—"MUCH SPEAKING"

"Alphabetical" Prolixity in Prayer—Jewish Confession of Sin—Devotional Ideals of the Jews—A Spiritual Emancipation—"Much Speaking" not Much Praying.

AS we have already pointed out, the liturgy of Israel, as it has come down through the ages, discloses a form of "vain repetitions," a species of "much speaking," which was after the manner of the Gentiles, or heathen, and was, therefore, unsuited to the promotion of a genuine, personal heart-communion with God. Singular to say, this form of prayer had been modelled, though with weak extravagance, upon a style of composition which finds evident sanction in the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament. That, however, is not surprising; for, as we well know, the worst is often reached by a corruption of the best.

The style of composition to which reference is now made was that known as the Alphabetical Acrostic. The method was not exclusively Hebraic, but Oriental in a larger sense of the word. In simplest expression, its characteristic is that the successive lines of poems so constructed begin with the letters of the Alphabet

in their regular order. In this style of composition there was, of course, literary art; beyond that, there was doubtless a practical end, as the poem could easily be memorised, and that was important in days when books were few. In the Book of Psalms there are noble poems constructed on this method, and some of these have found high favour in the liturgy of the Jewish people. The longest Psalm in the Old Testament (cxix.) is of this class: made up of 176 verses, it could readily be committed to memory when it was borne in mind that each of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in due order of succession, governed groups of eight verses of the Psalm.

It is by no means astonishing that the Alphabetical Psalms found in the Old Testament, in praise of God and His Law—holy, just, and good—should have been imitated by the teachers of Israel in later ages. When there was a demand for prayers which could be retained in the memory without difficulty, here was a singularly convenient method for their construction. It would seem, however, that the inspired measures, coming down from the great and glorious past, were copied with the express purpose of facilitating the making of "long prayers." Thus, occupied with the letter rather than the spirit, the Rabbis PILED UP terms of supplication and thanksgiving; and in due time there was developed in connection with the worship of Jehovah a liturgical system whose chief characteristic was its wealth of repetition—admittedly a repetition of thoughts rather than words, but none the less a wearying and sterile repetition.

It was unquestionably this feature of Synagogue worship that was in the mind of our Lord when He spoke of "vain repetitions," "much speaking." In

some degree these two terms explain one another, but not completely so. While the words “as the Gentiles do” throw light upon the general practice denounced, we may expect to find still further light thrown upon that practice by an examination of the liturgy to which, alike in form and substance, Israel has adhered so tenaciously through many generations.

“Alphabetical” Prolixity in Prayer.

Let it be noted that the Greek word *πολυλογία* (*polulogia*) has a significance at once clear and beyond dispute—“much speaking.” Of the verb rendered “use vain repetitions,” *βαπτολογέω* or *βαπταλογέω* (*battologeō* or *battalogeō*), the same cannot be said. Being nowhere found in classical Greek, it has been the subject of much speculation; and it cannot be pleaded that the explanations that have so far been given connect themselves in any definite manner with the evident intention of our Lord in teaching His disciples how to pray. Reserving more detailed treatment for an Appendix,¹ we here remark that, when studied in the light of the Synagogue prayers of the Jewish people, the word finds a ready meaning and an obvious allusion. On grounds to be shown in due course, we interpret *battologeō* as, “To speak from *Beth* to *Tav*” (or *Tau*) in prayer; that is, to pursue devotions with alphabetical proluxity, as was the manner of the Jews when making “long prayers”—and as, moreover, is their habit to this day (cf. Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47).²

In compositions — prayer-poems — going back to

¹ See Appendix II., p. 224 *infra*.

² Thus the first part of the word is an illustration of *onomatopæia*, or the imitation of a familiar sound, and that the sound of the letters *Beth* and *Tav* (or *Tau*) in the Hebrew alphabet, as used to designate the system of praying alphabetically. It may be well to add that, in the light of the

the time of Christ, and in others of the same character, we find the tendency of saying the same thing over and over again, in compliance with the Rabbinical saying: "He who prays much is certain to be heard." If there was not a bald tautology, there was something that was little better—a multiplying of words of precisely similar meanings, with the result that the language of worship was robbed of vitality. Hence, doubtless quite unconsciously, an empty formalism was produced, combined with foolish pride and self-complacency. The religion that was esteemed was not that of spiritual communion, but rather that of pretence and show, such as was exemplified in the case of a certain Rabbi, who has been extolled in the Talmud because he was observed to pray in the street, and then to walk a few yards and pray again, and so on. This was a case of interminable prayer, for every object that caught the Rabbi's eye was the theme of some new petition or words of blessing.¹

Having already given some illustrations of "much speaking" after the manner of Jews and Gentiles, we now present further instances of "vain repetitions" or *battologising* (an accommodation of the Greek word, used for convenience) as still found in the Prayers of the Synagogue. First consider the following, from the Service of the Day of Atonement:²

manner in which Hebrew proper names were transliterated in the Greek versions of the Old Testament, and ordinary Hebrew words in the second column of Origen's Hexapla, the form *batto* (or *batta*) reproduces the familiar sound in just such a way as we should expect.

¹ Jer. Ber. viii. 3; also ix.

² The prayer thus given may be seen in the Festival Service books, and is easily accessible in Singer's edition of the DAILY PRAYER BOOK of the Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire, p. 258. The names of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are inserted to show the progress of the acrostic.

(*Aleph*) We have trespassed—(*Beth*) We have been faithless—(*Gimel*) We have robbed—(*Daleth*) We have spoken basely—(*He*) We have committed iniquity—(*Vau*) We have wrought unrighteousness—(*Zayin*) We have been presumptuous—(*Cheth*) We have done violence—(*Teth*) We have forged lies—(*Yod*) We have counselled evil—(*Caph*) We have spoken falsely—(*Lamed*) We have scoffed—(*Mem*) We have revolted—(*Nun*) We have blasphemed—(*Samech*) We have been rebellious—(*Ayin*) We have acted perversely—(*Pe*) We have transgressed—(*Tzaddi*) We have persecuted—(*Koph*) We have been stiff-necked—(*Resh*) We have done wickedly—(*Shin*) We have corrupted ourselves—(*Tau*) We have committed abomination ; we have gone astray ; we have led astray.

By these words, many and various, and embedded in thousands more, the Jew says he is a sinner. In the Lord's Prayer, the same is said IN LESS THAN ONE WORD, for it is implied rather than expressed in the simple petition, “Forgive us our debts” (or sins).

Jewish Confession of Sin.

Another prayer, offered repeatedly at the Fast of Atonement, is even more battologistic. By a multitude of words, the penitent admits his guilt ; and among other forms of confession is one which—constructed as a compound acrostic, two lines for each letter of the alphabet—is thus expressed in English :¹

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee under
(*Aleph*) compulsion or of free will,

¹ With slight modifications in translation, this prayer is from the edition of the FESTIVAL PRAYERS edited by Herbert M. Adler and Arthur Davis ; the changes made being simply such as were required to exhibit with clearness the alphabetical sequence of the clauses. Here, also, the progress of the acrostic is indicated by the insertion of the letter-names of the Hebrew Alphabet.

- And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Aleph*) hardening of the heart;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee through
(*Beth*) lack of knowledge,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee with
(*Beth*) utterance of the lips;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Gimel*) unchastity,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Gimel*) public and in the secret place;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee with
(*Daleth*) knowledge and with deceit,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Daleth*) the spoken word;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by (*Hê*)
wronging a neighbour,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Hê*) the meditation of the heart;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Vau*) association with impurity,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Vau*) confession with the mouth alone;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Zayin*) despising parents and teachers,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Zayin*) presumption and in error;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Cheth*) violence,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Cheth*) profaning the Divine Name;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Teth*) uncleanness of lips,
And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Teth*) foolish speech;
For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Yod*) an evil inclination,

“VAIN REPETITIONS”—“MUCH SPEAKING” 35

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee with
(*Yod*) knowledge or unknowingly.

And for all these, O God of forgivenesses, forgive
us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Caph*) denying and lying,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Caph*) the taking of bribes;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Lamed*) scoffing,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Lamed*) an evil tongue;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Mem*) business transactions,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee in
(*Mem*) eating and in drinking;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Nun*) usury and interest,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Nun*) an outstretched neck of pride;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Sin*, for *Samech*) the conversation of our lips,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Sin*, for *Samech*) a wanton glance;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee with
(*Ayin*) haughty eyes,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee with
(*Ayin*) shameless brow.

And for all these, O God of forgivenesses, forgive
us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by (*Pê*)
breaking off the yoke,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Pê*) contentiousness;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Tzaddi*) ensnaring a neighbour,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Tzaddî*) envy;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Koph*) levity,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Koph*) being stiff-necked;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Resh*) running to do evil,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Resh*) tale-bearing;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Shin*) a vain oath,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Sin* for *Shin*) causeless hatred;

For the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Tau*) breach of trust,

And for the sin wherein we have sinned before Thee by
(*Tau*) terror of mind.

And for all these, O God of forgivenesses, forgive
us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

And so on, with a specification of every conceivable aspect of offence, positive and negative, actual and possible, making in all forty-four pleas on the alphabetical arrangement; these being followed by eight additional clauses respecting sins or debts in regard to various kinds of offerings, and deserts as to forms of punishment. Moreover, the refrain, "And for all these, O God of forgivenesses," is repeated four times in the section as a whole, and the conclusion is as follows:

And for the sins for which we deserve the four kinds of death inflicted by the House of Judgment—stoning, burning, beheading, and strangling.

In all, hundreds of words, many of them with

prefixes and suffixes, conveying emphasis; and this but a small portion of the penitential system of Jewish devotion! The bearing of such forms of prayer upon the words of rebuke and warning administered by our Lord is too obvious to require detailed statement. Suffice it to remark that prayers of this kind, when placed in contrast with the Lord's Prayer, go far to explain the gracious teaching of the Galilean Rabbi; and with many others the prayer-poem just given was utterly abolished and set aside for the Jew who, from the heart, assented to employ the single petition already quoted from the OUR FATHER—“Forgive us our debts” (sins).

Devotional Ideals of the Jews.

There seems to be no reason to question the contention of the Jews that some of the prayers now used in the Synagogue are of great age—in fact, were composed before the opening of the Christian era. Whether or not a particular prayer is actually old, certain it is that the liturgy is a harmonious whole, the mediæval compositions being modelled after the earliest traditional forms. Hence it comes about that the prayer-books that are used throughout Jewry express the devotional ideals of the people as they have come down to our time, the same having, of course, been protected from Christian influence with a consistent obstinacy which is the boast of the nation. And in these compilations prayers of the acrostic form, *i.e.* battologistic prayers, are very numerous.

The antiquity of this style of poetry is beyond dispute; for, as has been pointed out already, there are specimens in the Book of Psalms; the feature is also found in the Lamentations of Jeremiah and the Book

of Proverbs.¹ Speaking generally, the acrostic is equally characteristic of Neo-Hebraic poetry: the practice has, in fact, been cultivated for thousands of years. Again, it is not simply Hebraic; for alphabetic poems have been found among the writings of Samaritans, Syrians, and Arabs,² and the fact that Babylonian literature also knew the acrostic seems to indicate a wide prevalence of this form of poetry, and to suggest that contact with the heathen led to the undue development of this style of devotional writing in Israel. Hence, in the service-books of the Jews, we find the most solemn petitions ranged on an acrostic scaffolding, page after page of praise and prayer, words of confession and humiliation, being presented in mechanical terms, artificially conformed to an alphabetical order.

The practice thus described became so impressed upon the liturgy of the Synagogue as to prove a blight upon the regular devotions of the people. Some of the acrostics were simple, and some compound—occasionally quite elaborate; some were marked on the first letter, others on subsequent letters of the notable words; and not only was the opening word distinguished, but sometimes the second or third word, or such clause of a line or verse, or indeed others in succession or alternation. Now the acrostic is forward and direct, again it is backward and indirect, *i.e.* palindromic; and at

¹ See Pss. ix. and x. (taken together), xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.; Lam. i.-iv.; Prov. xxxi. 10-31.

² See article "Poetry," by Israel Davidson, in the JEWISH ENCYCLOPÆDIA, vol. x. The manuscript liturgy of the Samaritans presents the same feature, a fact which (in the light of 2 Kings xvii. 24-29) has a bearing upon Babylonian as well as Palestinian culture. Facts as to the extensive use of the alphabetical acrostic among these people were given by Dr. Moses Gaster before the Society of Biblical Archæology on Feb. 10, 1915. (See PROCEEDINGS for the year.)

other times it represents a singularly involved mode of expression, all this attracting the curious interest and demanding the close attention of the worshipper—hence not promoting a spirit of prayer. The systematic character of this feature in the liturgy of the Synagogue may be judged from the fact that when, on the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the congregation make seven circuits of the edifice, the prayers rehearsed are all *battological*, the seventh being of a specially elaborate construction.

A Spiritual Emancipation.

In giving the OUR FATHER, our Lord appears as a spiritual Emancipator of those who followed Him. We cannot rightly appreciate His act in giving the Prayer until we understand the character of the devotions in which His disciples had been trained, and from which He effectually set them free. In view, however, of the nature of the exercises that (as we have seen) were in vogue among the Jewish people, we are able more correctly than otherwise to estimate the signal importance of our Lord's warning and protest. When He gave the Prayer, He virtually said to His disciples: “You must not make a show of prayer, as do the Pharisees: you must not *battologise*, in the way that has been cultivated after the heathen manner. When you pray, enter the secret place, and in humility of spirit spare your words.”

Thus, while teaching His disciples a prayer, our Lord delivered for all generations a lesson on “How to Pray.” “God is in heaven and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few” (Eccles. v. 2). We must have regard to the intent of prayer as well as its content. We are to take care lest we be “like unto

them"—like unto men who multiply words, praying first in *Aleph*, then in *Beth*, then in *Gimel*, then in *Daleth*, and so throughout the Alphabet, and sometimes again and again many times repeated. Rather, when we pray we must be content with ALEPH, confine ourselves to the utmost simplicity; and thus, in absolute directness of speech, may we pray ABINU—"OUR FATHER."

At this point, we are face to face with a striking aspect of our Lord's teaching in giving the Prayer. As we have seen, He denounced the prolixity which, so to say, travels from B to Z in the artificial organisation of devotions, and then contented Himself with an instruction, indeed a formula, beginning with A, and finding a significant representation in that single opening letter of the Alphabet! Let the fact be carefully noted—As given in the Hebrew tongue, the Lord's Prayer was in A; and there was no attempt to proceed from *Beth* to *Tav*—from B to Z! With a forceful completeness, the Great Teacher disestablished all such devotions as followed the prevalent alphabetical arrangement, and at the same time showed how unreservedly He brought His disciples into the family of Heaven, constituting them children of God. In this, as in all His ministry, He revealed, or manifested, THE FATHER who had sent Him.

Suffice it for the present to add that, when our Lord gave His great lesson on prayer, He implanted within His followers a peculiar consciousness. Now for the first time they would pray as sons of God, knowing all the while that "their Father knew what they had need of before they asked Him." Moreover, "vain repetitions," in the form in which we have found them to be expressed by the word *battologeō*, were once and for

ever discredited. As commands and precepts which had been given to “them of old time” were reviewed (and revised) by HIM who said, “BUT I SAY UNTO YOU” (Matt. v.), so also, by the same LORD, the devotional practices of His age, and of days antecedent, though based upon ancient and canonical models, were found wanting, and superseded (Matt. vi.).

“Much Speaking” not Much Praying.

In reproducing, in this chapter and the one preceding, several Synagogue prayers, we have not for one moment been indifferent to the religious sentiment of the Jewish people. As a fact, we had no alternative but to give those prayers; for to have neglected such a source of illustration would have been little less than undutiful carelessness on the part of a Christian writer desirous of furnishing a true interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer. In fact, the illustration is historic, and lies at the foundation of Evangelical actuality. We accept it; and follow it up in no uncharitable spirit.

It cannot be wrong for the follower of Christ to recognise the rebuke administered by his Lord. If there is a dispute with Judaism, it is not ours but CHRIST’S. Indeed, we regard the present discussion as one in which, beyond all question, we follow our adorable Master, whose action we have endeavoured to make clear, both when, in terms of denunciation, He reflected upon the prayer-system of the Jews, and also when, at length, He summarily set that prayer-system aside.

Just here, however, we must carefully distinguish between things that differ. There is, of course, an essential difference between “much speaking” and *much praying*. The folly which our Lord denounced

was not *much praying*, nor, indeed, the repetition of such a prayer as, in itself, was good and fitting. On the contrary, He condemned a system of "much speaking" along lines that were well known to the disciples, and had proved utterly vain as a means of communion with God. We do well ever to bear in mind that in Gethsemane our Lord prayed repeatedly *in the same words*, "and was heard for His godly fear" (Matt. xxvi. 44; Heb. v. 7). And, moreover, did not our Master Himself pass whole nights in prayer? (Matt. xiv. 23-25; Luke v. 16). Thus it is not *much praying* that is condemned, but "much speaking" in a manner which, as we have seen, was designed to persuade and move a reluctant God—a practice which for ages has prevailed in the lands of the East.

As we know, the Hindus seek the favour of *Ram* by repeating his name thousands of times, and the Mohammedans appeal to *Allah* again and again with wearying reiteration. Such repetition, to use the words of Dr. A. B. Bruce, "is characteristic of Pagan prayer; and when it recurs in the Church, as in saying many 'Aves' and 'Paternosters,' it is Paganism redivivus."¹

In the time of our Lord, as we have seen, prayer had ceased to be a means of blessing in Israel. A deadly formalism had laid its grip upon the people. Their belief in regard to religious observances corresponded only too precisely, and, alas, very generally, with words that had been put into the mouth of the angel Raphael in the Apocryphal story of Tobit—"Good is prayer, with fasting and alms and righteousness" (xii. 8).²

¹ EXPOSITOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT, Comment on Matt. vi. 7.

² That prayer was sometimes mechanical (as it may ever be) is clear from the admonition of Rabbi Simeon: "Be careful when reading the

Yes: these things were GOOD, and emphatically so, in the sense that they were cherished and cultivated as AN END IN THEMSELVES rather than observed to the glory of God, and as a means of blessing to the penitent worshipper and to those by whom he might be surrounded.

Shema' and in the Prayer; and when thou prayest make not thy prayer a set task, but an appeal for mercy and grace before the All-Present" (*Ethics of the Fathers*, ch. ii. sec. 18, Singer's edition of DAILY PRAYER BOOK).

CHAPTER V

FORM AND SUBSTANCE

Arrangement of the Petitions—Scope and Influence—A Prayer for All Times—Singular and Plural.

AS with the Beatitudes, so also with the Lord's Prayer, there has been much discussion as to scope and literary structure. How many petitions are there? has been the question of reverent minds all down the ages, and the answer has been decided by the manner in which the concluding line of the fuller version—that found in St. Matthew's Gospel—has been interpreted: "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (or evil). Those who, like Augustine of old, find two petitions here, hold the entire number to have been *seven*; while those who, on the other hand, with Origen, Chrysostom, and the Reformed theologians generally, maintain that the clauses in question are correlated and constitute one petition, count only *six*—three of them having a Godward reference, and three a manward.

In this light the Prayer has often been compared to the Decalogue, with its statement of human duty, first toward God, and then toward man (cf. Matt. xxii.

37-40; Mark xii. 29-31). Beyond the resemblance, however—or rather beneath it—there lies a profound difference, that which subsists between Law and Grace, between the Old Testament and the New. “While in the one case our debt to God and to man is laid upon us from above as a commandment that must be obeyed, in the other we look up to God, crying with Augustine, *Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis*—‘Give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt’” (*Conf.* x. 29).¹ On grounds to be set forth in due course, we regard the petitions as SIX in number.

Following the Revised Version, we note that, in Matthew, the invocation is “Our Father, which art in heaven”; in Luke, simply “Father.” The petitions themselves may be set forth as follow :

MATTHEW.	LUKE.
Hallowed be Thy name.	Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.	Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done.	(<i>omitted.</i>)
Give us this day our daily bread.	Give us day by day our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts.	Forgive us our sins.
Bring us not into temptation.	Bring us not into temptation.

The petitions having a Godward reference are three in Matthew, two in Luke. Not only is the request, “Thy will be done,” in Matthew alone, but, as there found, the desire is viewed in a comparative light, “as in heaven, so upon the earth.” Two of the petitions having a manward reference are also extended in Matthew : pardon is sought “as we also have forgiven our debtors”; and protection from temptation is supported

¹ J. C. Lambert, in *DICTIONARY OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPELS*, s. 2, “Lord’s Prayer.”

by the plea: "but deliver us from the evil *one*" (or *evil*). In St. Luke's version only one of these shows an extension; the petition for pardon is: "Forgive us our sins: for we ourselves also forgive everyone that is indebted to us."

The margin of the Gospel of St. Luke, R.V., indicates attempts, in authorities other than the oldest and highest, to conform the version there found to that given by Matthew; but the two forms, in all their distinctive characteristics, must be jealously retained. As already intimated, in Matthew we have the Prayer in its original fullness—though the Master gave it in Hebrew, it is set forth in Greek; in Luke, on the other hand, we have a rehearsal of the Prayer, as given at a subsequent period of our Lord's ministry, and then given suggestively, or as to its main points only. He who could summarise the Decalogue in a sentence was apt in such work of compression (Matt. xix. 18, 19, xxii. 35-37; cf. Luke x. 27).

Arrangement of the Petitions.

The short (or "Fountain") prayers given forth by the Rabbis, like some other such compositions of the highest type in the liturgy of Israel, show a well-balanced literary shape as well as precision in their terms. The Lord's Prayer, as given in Matthew, admits of a like description. The petitions, in the familiar words of our English New Testament, may be presented as follow:

OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN . . . [Invocation.]		
Thy Name be hallowed	} as in heaven, } so upon the earth.	{ First series of } petitions—three } in number.
Thy Kingdom come		
Thy Will be done		

Our daily bread give us this day.	} Second series of
And forgive us our debts	
—as we also have forgiven our debtors.	
And lead us not into temptation	
—but deliver us from the evil one.	petitions — also three in number.

As thus set out, the Prayer exhibits a rhythm and cadence which, to some extent, accounts for the ease with which it has ever found lodgment in the minds of young and old. In the first part, beyond the opening word "Our," there is no word of, for, or about *man*. It is all THE FATHER, and the manifestation of His heavenly glory upon earth. It has frequently been observed that the clause "as in heaven, so upon the earth," logically qualifies all three of the petitions which precede it. This is doubtless a sound conclusion, though it would not strike every reader at first sight. In fact, the central clause "Thy Kingdom come" would so direct the thoughts of the first disciples to the great Messianic expectation, that the idea of a kingdom "as in heaven, so upon the earth," might be somewhat remote. Yet it is certain that God has a supernal kingdom which may rightly be contemplated as the model of that which is to come, for which we daily pray. Verily, "the Lord is King," not only over world-rulers, but over every principality and power in the universe. Accordingly, as in heaven the Name is hallowed, and the Will is done, so also there, "His Kingdom ruleth over all"—"He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven."

In the second part of the Prayer we find MAN in every line, represented by the pronouns "our," "us," and "we" in the several petitions; but as it is man at prayer, the suppliant is distinguished by a spirit of dependence upon God for things temporal and spiritual;

and we find him asking for blessings which, to us in this late day, have been made doubly sure, through the completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words are such as were more or less familiar in the worship of Jehovah, the God of Israel, and the phrasing such as befitted acts of devotion on the part of the men of Galilee who had so recently entered the school of Christ.

The Prayer is great, but it is more, it is beautiful. Though, as we believe, given in the first place in the Hebrew language, it came into literature in the Greek of the New Testament Scriptures. Here also it was afforded a shapely form which has engaged the admiration of scholars. The late Bishop Jebb arranged the lines thus:¹

ΠΑΤΕΡ 'ΗΜΩΝ 'Ο ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΙΣ,
 'ΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤΩ ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΣΟΥ,
 ΕΛΘΕΤΩ 'Η ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑ ΣΟΥ,
 ΓΕΝΗΘΗΤΩ ΤΟ ΘΕΛΗΜΑ ΣΟΥ,
 'ΩΣ ΕΝ ΟΥΡΑΝΩ, ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΗΣ ΓΗΣ.
 ΤΟΝ ΑΡΤΟΝ 'ΗΜΩΝ ΤΟΝ ΕΠΙΟΤΣΙΟΝ,
 ΔΟΣ 'ΗΜΙΝ ΣΗΜΕΡΟΝ·
 ΚΑΙ ΑΦΕΣ 'ΗΜΙΝ ΤΑ ΟΦΕΙΛΗΜΑΤΑ 'ΗΜΩΝ,
 'ΩΣ ΚΑΙ 'ΗΜΕΙΣ ΑΦΙΕΜΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΦΕΙΛΕΤΑΙΣ 'ΗΜΩΝ·
 ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΕΙΣΕΝΕΓΚΗΣ 'ΗΜΑΣ ΕΙΣ ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΝ,
 ΑΛΛΑ 'ΡΥΣΑΙ 'ΗΜΑΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΝΗΡΟΥ. ΑΜΗΝ.

It cannot be without significance, in a Prayer which was not simply spoken, but categorically *taught*—and intended for Greek-speaking people as well as those who were familiar with the Hebrew language, and hence was quite early given an authorised rendering in the classic tongue—that the lines should end in the systematic manner which is thus apparent. The first

¹ Jebb's SACRED LITERATURE, p. 435. See also the *Expository Times*, vol. ii. p. 242, vol. xiii. p. 431.

and fifth lines end in *sigma*, and the intervening three uniformly in *upsilon*. These complete the first part of the Prayer. Then, including the customary "Amen" in the last line, we find that all six lines of the second part end with *nu*. In all probability, during the early centuries, these features contributed in no small measure to preserve the integrity of the Prayer; and also proved an aid to memory in its general dissemination among the people.

Scope and Influence.

How wide is the scope of the instrument of devotion which is now occupying our minds! There is profound reason in the saying of Tertullian, that only God could teach us how He wished to be addressed in prayer. In the words of Isaac Barrow (1630-77) the formula was "composed and dictated by Him who best knew what we ought to pray for and how we ought to pray; what matter of desire, what manner of address, what disposition of mind, would be most pleasing and acceptable to His Father, would most become and fit us in our approaches to Him."

We observe the sublimity, the gravity, the necessity, the singular choiceness of the matter, together with the fit order and just disposition thereof, according to the natural precedence of things in dignity and necessity; the full brevity, the deep plainness, the comely simplicity of expression; the lowly reverence signified therein, accompanied with due faith and confidence—these and the like virtues directive of our devotion, we observe running generally through the whole contexture of this venerable form.¹

The general comprehensiveness of the Prayer for followers of Christ in all ages has been allowed by

¹ Barrow's WORKS, edited by J. Hamilton, vol. ii. p. 552.

expositors of every complexion. In the third century Cyprian declared it to be "so copious in special virtue that there is nothing omitted in all our prayers and petitions which is not comprehended in this epitome of heavenly doctrine." And note the words of Hugh Latimer, reformer and martyr :

As the law of love is the sum and abridgment of the other laws, so this Prayer is the sum and abridgment of all other prayers. All other prayers are contained in this Prayer ; yea, whatsoever mankind hath need of as to soul and body, that same is contained in this Prayer.¹

It is important to observe that the formula is, in a definite sense, A PRAYER. It is not a form of confession, nor is it a song of praise ; but, rather, it is a series of petitions, looking forward, in the first place, to a coming manifestation of the glory of God, as hoped-for and expected by such as worship the Father ; and, in the second place, looking forward to a daily realisation of conditions which make for the material and spiritual well-being of followers of Christ, as the same may be felt to be needful, and be made the subject of earnest desire.

It has often been said that the Prayer is without any clause expressive of praise or thanksgiving. In view of the fact that the formula is for all seasons, in a word, for EVERY DAY—and, therefore, not simply for times of joy and comfort—the note of praise or thanksgiving was wisely omitted : omitted, that is, by Divine wisdom. If there had been a clause, or clauses, of the kind suggested, then assuredly, when the moods or experiences of worshippers made praise and thanksgiving difficult, the Prayer would naturally have been

¹ SEVEN SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Sermon I.

neglected, or laid aside. In such a case, victims of misfortune, to whom the Paternal ways were for the present mysterious, would certainly have concluded that the Prayer was not for them; while if, in spite of circumstances, they had used it, there would have been grave danger of insincerity of action, of hypocrisy in the very forms of Divine worship. No: in a prayer for all circumstances there is no more call for a note of praise than there is for one of fearsome awe, which is equally absent from the Prayer.

A Prayer for All Times.

We do well to observe in this connection that the Prayer is composed of terms having a universal application; *i.e.*, it is for *all disciples of Christ*, for *every day*, and for *every state and condition of life*. Hence we may use the words both when praise is restrained through sorrow, and when it abounds through a lively sense of the mercy and faithfulness of God. Quite marvellous, then, is the wisdom that kept the formula free from expressions which, in certain experiences, would have rendered it unsuitable and impossible to devoted followers of the Lord. While, however, this is so, we quite commonly find that, whatever the state of heart or mind, the reverent use of the OUR FATHER induces in the worshipper feelings of delight in God, so that, ever more and more, he learns to pray "WITH THANKSGIVING." The first three clauses of the Prayer, regarding the Name, the Kingdom, and the Will of God, may ever, in this manner, be charged with such emotions of praise as, in happiest days, abound in loyal hearts.

The intrinsic beauty of the Prayer, and its moral and spiritual influence upon persons of all ages and

conditions, were thus outlined by the late Dr. Adolph Saphir :

It is a model Prayer, and as such commends itself to the most superficial glance—approves itself at once to the conscience of man. It is beautiful and symmetrical, like the most finished work of art. The words are plain and unadorned, yet majestic ; and so transparent and appropriate that, once fixed in the memory, no other expressions ever mix themselves up with them ; the thought of substituting other words never enters the mind. Grave and solemn are the petitions, yet the serenity and tranquil confidence, the peace and joy which they breathe, prove attractive to every heart.

The Prayer is short, that it may be quickly learned, easily remembered, and frequently used ; but it contains all things pertaining to life and godliness. In its simplicity it seems adapted purposely for the weakness of the inexperienced and ignorant, and yet none can say that he is familiar with the heights and depths which it reveals, and with the treasures of wisdom it contains. It is calm, and suited to the even tenor of our daily life, and yet in times of trouble and conflict the Church has felt its value and power more especially, has discovered in it anew that it anticipates every difficulty and danger, that it solves every problem, and comforts the disciples of Christ in every tribulation of the world.¹

It is the beloved and revered friend of our childhood, and it grows with our growth, a never-failing counsellor and companion amid all the changing scenes of life. And as in our lifetime we must confess ourselves, with Luther, to be only learning the high and deep lessons of those petitions, so it will take eternity to give them their answer.²

It has been pointed out from time to time that the

¹ Dr. Saphir notes, by way of illustration, that during the revolutionary movement of 1848, Tholuck in Halle, and Maurice in London, preached on the Lord's Prayer with special reference to the times.

² LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lect. II.

two sections of the Prayer exhibit an inter-relation, clause by clause. We may place them over against one another thus :

SECTION I.	SECTION II.
(A) { The Name . . . The Kingdom . . . The Will . . .	(B) { Bread. Forgiveness. Temptation.

(A) represents the heavenly ; (B) the earthly. In the former we see the Cause of God ; in the latter the People of God. As, then, we ask for bread, we do so in order to a sustained life and vigour that will enable us to magnify God and anticipate in our own souls the universal hallowing of His NAME. Again, as we pray for forgiveness (release from debts) we are properly concerned with the Divine glory and honour, so as to be in harmony with the KINGDOM from which all causes of offence will be excluded, and in which every citizen will be able to fulfil the work devolving upon him. Further, when we seek immunity from temptation, and deliverance from evil, it is that we may be unhindered in our endeavour to do God's WILL on earth as it is done in heaven.

Singular and Plural.

By the use of the Prayer, the disciples of Christ became conscious of truly glorious relations. They were Children of God—hence “Our Father” ; they were Disciples of Christ—using the Prayer given by Him who is Teacher, Master, Lord ; and it was because they sustained these relations that—having accepted His call, and received through Him the spirit of sonship—they continued to company with Him in spite of difficulties by the way, and, moreover, to pass

their lives as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." In such a body of men there must be a vital solidarity; the constituent parts are "members one of another." In harmony with this, the Prayer is in the plural number as to its pronouns. There is no self-centredness; each prays with all, and all with each.

Here the evident design of our Lord receives light from Jewish custom; for the short prayers—"Fountain" or epitome prayers—given by individual Rabbis, equally with those ordered for regular Synagogue use, were uniformly in the plural number:

The short prayer was to be prayed in the plural number, though he that prayed was alone by himself; because it should never seem as though a man were cut off from the congregation.¹

As an ideal this is as becoming in the Christian Church as it was in Israel. The suppliant must not be absorbed in his own concerns. Hence he prays "OUR Father"; and the Hearer of Prayer, with "wide-embracing, wondrous love," has an ear, not only for this and that person, but also for all the members of His great family, scattered throughout the world.

It has become customary to distinguish somewhat severely between the "I believe" of Faith and the "Our Father" of Love. The distinction is of value, because faith is a personal thing; but it must not be pressed too far, for love may equally be a personal thing! As a fact, both faith and love may find expression in the plural form as well as in the singular; if the body of believers may pray "OUR Father," so also may they confess "WE believe." And this sense

¹ Lightfoot's WORKS, Pitman's edition, vol. vi. p. 426, vol. xi. pp. 143, 144.

of union, indeed communion, within the body of the faithful is no fancy of the imagination, but, rather, a glorious reality. Recall that the seer of Patmos heard angels and saints in heaven praise in plural terms: "Salvation to OUR God—Now is come the Kingdom of OUR God—Praise OUR God," etc. (Rev. vii. 9-12, xii. 10, xix. 1-7). This solidarity, moreover, finds delightful expression in the Eastern Creeds, which begin "WE believe," as distinguished from the Western "I believe."¹ In confession, as well as in praise and prayer, there has been a preference for the plural form in the Orient, the region which was first influenced by Christ and His Apostles.²

A failure to recognise the PLURAL character of the Prayer has led to misunderstanding in regard to its suitableness for present conditions; has, in fact, been responsible for an objection against the fourth petition—that for bread. It has been asked: "How can one who, so to say, has 'a full cupboard and a big balance

¹ See Westcott's HISTORIC FAITH, Note III.

² Needless to say, plural prayer specially befits such petitions as are general, and express the needs of the people of God as a whole. When we ask for ourselves such things as others require likewise, then we must associate ourselves with the entire "household of faith." At the same time, special circumstances will bring in exceptions such as justify the rule. Hence the Rabbis authorised prayers and benedictions in the singular number for cases that were definitely individual; accordingly, the singular element is found in prayers said on retiring to rest, and likewise in benedictions offered by persons who have completed a dangerous journey, recovered from illness, and so forth. There are, moreover, many prayers in the singular number in the Old Testament. The New Testament records of Apostolic benedictions are remarkable for their plural character: "God OUR Father"—"OUR Lord Jesus Christ," etc. See 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 2, vi. 24; Phil. i. 2; 1 Thess. v. 28; 2 Thess. iii. 18; Philem. 3; 2 Pet. i. 1. We do not, of course, include several other instances that lack the support of the best authorities, as followed (in general) by the text of the Revised Version.

at the bank' pray 'Give . . . this day . . . bread'?" In other words, how can a man, in prayer, reasonably ask for that which he already possesses? We reply, that all depends upon the attitude of such a man toward God, and therefore toward elementary Christian duty. Though passing as a follower of Christ, a man who is content to hoard wealth for himself alone, and to spend it with no wider purpose of benevolence—without any thought for the needs of others of the great body of believers—cannot offer the plural petition. One who, in such a manner, stands severely alone, cannot pray the plural prayer in any of its clauses.

On the other hand, a rich man of broader sympathies, and a consistent Christian withal, occupies a totally different ground; and with reference to him an objection such as the one specified can have no force whatever. He holds his wealth as a steward for God, and administers his possessions with a due consideration for the needs of others. In a word, this man is consciously "a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth," and accordingly prepared, as circumstances require, to *share the burdens and cares of others of like precious faith*—"as bound with them," as being equally "in the body" (Heb. xiii. 3).

Do we not recall that the early days of the Church, when the OUR FATHER, with its plural petitions, had its primitive influence and force, were days in which, in a singularly impressive manner, the bounty of some—described as "possessors of lands or houses"—as gladly distributed, was used to a complete satisfaction of the pressing needs of all? (See Acts iv. 32-35.)

CHAPTER VI

THE INVOCATION

I. "OUR FATHER"

The Fatherhood of God—A Filial Consciousness—A New Revelation—"My Father and Your Father"—"Father of Us."

WE proceed to study the Prayer as it was given by the Heaven-sent Teacher. We shall do well to bear in mind, and that continually, the circumstances in which the instruction was delivered; and, moreover, we must consider the various clauses in a twofold light: first, in the light of the religious practices of the time, as so plainly reflected in the passage leading up to the Prayer, in Matt. vi. 1-8; and, secondly, in the light of the duties and experiences to which our Lord called His first disciples—duties and experiences to which, in their fundamental characteristics, we also, in this late day, are equally called by the same Divine Master.

The first division of the Prayer (*vv.* 9b, 10) takes the form of a filial address to God, whose Name is praised, and in whose honour petitions are offered which look forward to the time when the rule of the

Beneficent Creator shall be universal and unchallenged throughout the world. It is evidently designed that, with these clauses, the heart of the petitioner should be led out in deep emotion, for they begin, "*Our Father*"; that his loyal devotion should be expressed in language which no stranger to the Divine fear could use—"Hallowed be Thy Name"; that his hope that the God of Heaven shall speedily command the obedience of all men, should find utterance in "*Thy Kingdom come*"; and, lastly, that in heart he should desire, and in conversation of life he should anticipate, the day when the Heavenly Father's Will shall be done, "as in heaven, so upon the earth,"—*i.e.*, completely and by all men.

In Matthew's Gospel the invocation is "*Our Father which art in heaven*"; in Luke's, according to the best editions of the text (followed by the R.V.), it is simply "*Father*." There is Hebraic balance and completeness about the former style of address; the latter, however, is quite fitting in an informal re-statement, giving the outstanding points of the Prayer, and not rehearsing its terms with precision and in their entirety.¹ There can be no doubt that the "*Father*" of Luke is employed to recall the "*Our Father*" of Matthew; in other words, the difference is formal, and not fundamental. In both cases the Prayer is plural, as the petitions in the second

¹ Oriental quotation, citation, or rehearsal are measures that have their own characteristics. These find forcible illustration in the manner in which our Lord brought "the commandments" before the rich young man (Matt. xix. 16-22, and refs.); and again, in reply to a "tempting" lawyer, summarised the law in two "commandments"—"the great and first" and "a second like unto it" (Matt. xxii. 34-40). To a like effect, the Master rehearsed the Prayer (as given in Luke) in a manner that was suggestive rather than all-inclusive of its terms, as these are found in Matthew's Gospel,

division, in Matthew as well as in Luke, plainly show : hence we need not distinguish too rigidly between the two versions of the one Prayer.

The Fatherhood of God.

Addressing ourselves to the invocation, as given in Matthew, "Our Father which art in heaven," we have a theme for contemplation as well as a subject for study. In the words of the late Bishop Westcott :

The oldest Greek poets spoke of Zeus as "the father of gods and men" under the imagery of patriarchal life, and they made Him like to themselves. Philosophers spoke of the Father of the universe, recognising something more than an arbitrary connexion between the Creator and the Creation, but they added that "it is hard to gain a knowledge of Him, and impossible to communicate it to the world." The Hebrew Prophets spoke of the Lord as the Father of Israel, forming and disciplining the chosen people with a wise and tender love. But Christ first added the title "My Father" to that of "Our Father." It is through the revelation of the Son that we can find each our personal fellowship with a Father in heaven.¹

This is beyond question : the doctrine of the Father and that of the Son are inseparable. "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18). The Son interpreted the Father in words as well as deeds ; and when giving forth the Prayer He enunciated truths of primary importance in regard to the means whereby His followers might enjoy communion with God.

We recall that Jehovah had been a Father to Israel, whom He loved as a son, and cherished with paternal affection and care (Ex. iv. 22 ; Deut. xxxii. 6 ; Jer.

¹ THE HISTORIC FAITH, Lect. III.

xxx. 9; Hos. xi. 1). The prophets of the nation spoke of Jehovah in terms of a Father against whom Israel had sinned; and surely the use of the tender word emphasised the waywardness of the people, and left them without excuse in their persistent transgression. Moreover, while inspiring regard for the outraged fatherhood, the prophets spoke of the mercy and forgiveness of the Lord God of Israel (Isa. i. 2, lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8; Jer. iii. 4, 19; Mal. i. 6, ii. 10). Thus, in due time, the nation came to be viewed as under the fatherly care of its Covenant-God. This teaching, most assuredly, was not "from man"; it was designed to prepare the way for a still deeper revelation of the Divine mind. As in other respects, so also in this, the Law—the entire body of Old Testament teaching—was a tutor to bring Israel to Christ.

A Filial Consciousness.

In due course, a doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood, in some degree, enriched the consciousness of the nation; and as a consequence, in the centuries that immediately preceded the advent of our Lord, leaders and teachers of the people understood God to be the Father, both of Israel as a whole, and of individuals in the chosen family. The righteous man was referred to (and that by hostile lips) as one who "vaunteth that God is his Father," and one such worthy could say of the Creator: "O Lord, Father and Master of my life" (Wis. ii. 16, 18; Ecclus. xxiii. 1, 4).¹ Being exceptional, however, and by no means systematic, we are

¹ Other passages may be consulted, in addition to those given in the text, *e.g.*—*National sense*: Deut. i. 31, viii. 5; Ps. lxviii. 5, lxxxii. 6, ciii. 13. *Individual sense*, more or less definite, in the Apocryphal Books, as follows: Wis. xiv. 13; Tob. xiii. 4; 3 Macc. vi. 8 (also *v.* 3, some eds.).

not disposed to invest these latter expressions with any great significance. Assuredly, they do not constitute such a trustful invocation of God as we find in the Lord's Prayer. Yet, notwithstanding, they represent a form of utterance which finds an impressive place in the Prayers of the Synagogue; though there, even as in the Old Testament, the fatherhood is one strictly within the limits of the chosen nation of Israel.

Hence, among the Jews, "*Our Father, our King*," became a frequent mode of allusion and appeal to the God of Israel, in liturgical forms which, in the passage of the generations, have been jealously guarded from Christian influence. Moreover, the liturgy of the Synagogue speaks again and again of "*Our Father*" and "*Father of Mercy*," and in one place the service takes this form :

Reader : One is our God ; *He is our Father* ; He is our King ; He is our Saviour ; and He of His mercy will let us hear a second time, in the presence of all living (His promise)—"To be to you for a God."

Congregation : "I am the Lord your God,"

Reader : And in Thy Holy Words it is written, saying,

Congregation : "The Lord shall reign for ever, thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord."¹

Here we find the Creator and Preserver of Israel under various designations—God, *Father*, King, Saviour. The relation is, however, predominantly national. It was indeed a privilege for Israel to be led so far in the knowledge of God : it is our joy, however, to know a

¹ DAILY PRAYER BOOK, Singer's edition. See Additional Service for Sabbaths, p. 161 ; and for "*Our Father*," "*Father of Mercy*," and "*Our Father, our King*," see Morning Service, pp. 55-62.

higher and deeper, a wider and more glorious sense or application of the most attractive epithet of all. That meaning remained to be revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ; it was, in fact, a Fatherhood manifested by Him who came forth from the bosom of the Father—who therefore knows His mind and comprehends His heart—and, moreover, a Fatherhood showing an interest in men regardless of race or nation, as they may become associated in life and service with the well-beloved and revealing Son. Israel knew the doctrine in its external features, not as to its internal relations. Yet, in calling God their Father, the pious in Israel recognised their high privilege through the election. Theirs was the adoption, or sonship, no less than “the covenants, the giving of the law, and the promises” (Rom. ix. 4).

These and such-like facts place it beyond question that, when opening the Prayer with “Our Father,” the Divine Teacher employed words that could not but prove singularly attractive to His followers. His scholars might not have known the power, but unquestionably they were familiar with the form. In presence of the care which Jehovah showed for the people, in the days of the elders of the nation, and continued from generation to generation, the Fatherhood of God was a just development of the teaching of Moses and the Prophets.

A New Revelation.

When our Lord put upon the lips of His disciples the OUR FATHER, He led them, collectively and individually, to the realisation of a truth that could not but minister the profoundest satisfaction to their hearts, the fullest confidence to their minds.

Let it be quite clear, however, that, though the

Prayer opens with a familiar word, there is nevertheless in that opening something absolutely new and striking in its import. God may have been thought of as "Father"—and, as we have seen, the thought had been conveyed by holy men of ancient time—but He had not, in the simplicity of a restful faith, been invoked in that sweet word by praying men and women in whose hearts had been implanted, through the teaching of the Son, the assurance of a personal filial relation: "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father." We have to recognise that, at length, the adoption, or sonship, is not merely a personal desire, but A FACT DECLARED AND DEMONSTRATED; and those who follow Christ come into a lively enjoyment of its meaning.

Thus the Divine Fatherhood assumes a new and profound significance with the coming of our Lord. Not only does the Son interpret the Father, but He introduces into the presence of the Majesty in the heavens those whom He calls into the circle of His disciples. Herein the Teacher from Galilee goes beyond all such Rabbis and leaders as had hitherto given forth "Fountain" or epitome prayers; for, whereas they could not exceed the scope of the body of petition which they deemed it right or wise to summarise, He went beyond all precedent, and glorified—as only the Son could glorify—Him who had sent Him, by giving a Prayer which, as never before, expressed as a fact, and implied as a doctrine, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all believers.

The Prayer brings to mind the Creator and Preserver of all things in the aspect of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—the Father "from whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named" or

designated (Eph. iii. 14, 15, R.V. *marg.*). Hence the archetypal Father, the God of all grace, implying, of course, an archetypal Sonship, as revealed to mankind in the only-begotten Son. Thus, as paternal conceptions take us back to God, so also do filial conceptions take us back to Christ. Accordingly, in family relations, as Divinely ordained, even as in the old-time tabernacle appointments, we find upon earth "copies of things in the heavens" (Heb. ix. 23, R.V.).

Doubtless it was the custom for disciples following individual Rabbis to call themselves "brethren"—as members, associates, or fellows of religious communities have at all times shown a tendency to do; but those who joined themselves to Christ, as we have witnessed the disciples to have done, participated in a fraternity which had its roots in a profound spiritual experience, and which, accordingly, conferred an exceptional distinction. As sheep safely folded, they had received life from the Good Shepherd. Whether, to begin with, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, these men formed one family; and, as children of God, they were taught to pray "*Our Father.*"

"My Father and Your Father."

This advance in knowledge, consequent upon the following of Christ, involved, as we have already found, a break with Judaism. The new teaching in which the disciples acquiesced—to which they gave themselves with a cordiality that led them to leave all and follow Christ—meant to them more than we at this late day can readily imagine. In a manner at once specific and emphatic the Prayer was employed in the revelation of the Father. What this revelation implied may be inferred from the fact that, when dealing with those

who opposed Him, our Lord said: "Ye know neither Me nor My Father" (John viii. 19); and when predicting the persecution which would fall to the lot of His followers, He explained that such persecution would result from the fact THE WORLD NEITHER KNEW HIM NOR THE FATHER (John xvi. 3). How pivotal is the revelation of the Father, in view of these words!

In revealing the Father, Christ made known One whom He knew. His speech was of "the Father," "My Father," "My Father and your Father." We do not find, however, that the Master Himself used the Prayer which He gave to His disciples: He said "FATHER" without the "OUR," and herein, as in other respects, showed Himself to be "separate from sinners." The Gospels afford many a glimpse of our Lord's personal method of prayer and praise; and what we find is that He addressed the Maker of heaven and earth as:

"FATHER"—See Matt. xi. 25, 26, xxvi. 39, 42; Luke x. 21, xxii. 42, xxiii. 34, 46; John xi. 41, xii. 27, 28, xvii. 1, 5, 21, 24.

"ABBA, FATHER"—Mark xiv. 36.

"HOLY FATHER"—See John xvii. 11.

"RIGHTEOUS FATHER"—See John xvii. 25.

The extent to which the Son Himself was occupied with the Father throughout His ministry upon earth, forms a subject of absorbing interest. His life-purpose was to do the will of His Father—to "keep the commandments," or discharge the instructions which He had received; His aim to the end was to accomplish the work of the Father who had sent Him, and at length to declare the whole to be "finished" (John xv. 10, xvii. 4). On this subject of our Lord's occupa-

tion with the Father, Dr. G. H. Gilbert has some helpful observations:

The first recorded sentence of Jesus (Luke ii. 49), and that which was probably the last (Luke xxiii. 46), both contain the name "Father." The Boy of twelve felt an inward constraint to be engaged in the things of His Father, and twenty years later, expiring on the cross, it was into the hands of His Father that He commended His spirit. Throughout His ministry His use of this name is what we might expect from the scene which St. Luke records from His boyhood. "The child is father of the man." Whenever the personal relation between Him and God is involved, Jesus employs no name but "Father," if we except a single passage where He quotes from the 22nd Psalm (Matt. xv. 34). In each of the five prayers where the words of Jesus are given, He addresses God as "Father" (Matt. xi. 25-27, xxvi. 39, 42; Luke xxiii. 34, 46); and in the longest of these, which includes only three verses, the name is repeated five times (Matt. xi. 25-27).

The Fatherhood of God is more conspicuous in John than in the Synoptics, the word "Father" occurring about ninety times, as against five in Mark, seventeen in Luke, and forty-five in Matthew. Here, also, as in the Synoptics, the word is found only on the lips of Jesus, with the exception of three passages where the author speaks from his own Christian point of view (John i. 18, viii. 27, xiii. 3), and one passage in which he attributes his Christian usage to the Baptist (iii. 35).¹

Thus, we see, the Father was revealed by (and in) the Son; and revealed in such measure that nothing that the loving follower of Christ should know has been held back. To know the Son is to know the Father also (John xiv. 7). Do we further ask the Way to God? The answer was given when the Master said: "I am the Way" (vv. 5, 6). Must we not, in these

¹ DICTIONARY OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPELS, vol. i. p. 580.

circumstances, conclude that, to know God as the Creator and Preserver of all things is to have but a partial knowledge? we must proceed to know Him in the Paternal relations of Redeemer and Keeper of His people. It is the privilege and joy of Christians to confess the Father and the Son; and it is a fearful fact that apostasy from the Faith alienates from both Father and Son (1 John ii. 28; 2 John 9; cf. John xv. 23).

“Father of Us.”

It is “*Our* Father.” The God of all grace, to whom all believers bow, is not, in a systematic manner—assuredly not by those still able to take their part in life’s struggle and to bear in some measure the burdens of others—to be addressed as “*My* Father.” As we have already seen, the Prayer is in plural terms; and this applies to St. Luke’s version, which opens simply with “Father,” as well as to St. Matthew’s; for the clauses which most definitely express human need and desire are in both cases worded thus: “Give US—forgive US—bring US,” etc. It was, as we have also seen, a rule in the Synagogue that all summary or “Fountain” prayers should be in the plural, even as the longer compositions were:

In which number our Saviour teacheth us, and that upon very good reason: in whatsoever solitude or distance we are, yet we ought to acknowledge ourselves joined with the Church, and to pray for her happiness, as well as for our own.¹

This truth has its practical bearings. In the first place, it shows that the Fatherhood involves a spiritual communion among those who are sons and daughters

¹ Lightfoot’s WORKS, Pitman’s edition, vol. xi. p. 144.

of the Lord Almighty. In the words of the late Dr. Mackay :

Every believer is our brother or sister. Hence every time we really pray this Prayer we not only profess to believe in Jesus, but we pray with and for all Christians. The body has many members in different states of light and different degrees of trial, but "Our" covers them all—high or low, rich or poor, old or young. The one great question is—Are we in Christ? Then the Holy Spirit unites us. So all are one, simply because they are the Lord's.¹

In the second place, this truth lays the foundation of Christian charity in a sublime sense of the word. Every man prays for all the Church, and the whole Church prays for every man.

We must not overlook the sense in which He is "*our* Father." It is not because we have sought Him, chosen Him, "claimed" Him. He is "*our* Father," as the Greek clearly shows, because "*Father of us*." Says Bishop Christopher Wordsworth :

Pater hēmōn—"Father of us." Not *hēmetere*. He lays the Foundation of Prayer in *Love*. If God is our *Father*, we should honour Him as His *children*; and if He is the Father of us (*hēmōn*), we should love *one another* as *brethren*.²

This must be so. Fundamentally, the father owns the child, not the child the father. Hence, when we say "*Our Father*" we should think, not of our possession, but of His rightful claim. By a Divine act of grace and power we have been born into His family: God has declared Himself to be FATHER OF US. Accordingly, we pray to One who is the Author of our being,

¹ NOTES ON THE SHORTER CATECHISM, pp. 251, 252.

² GREEK NEW TESTAMENT: with Notes and Introductions. Comment on Matt. vi. 9.

both natural and spiritual, for time and eternity, and to whom our devotion is rightfully due; to One who, as our unslumbering Keeper and unfailing Provider, demands our filial love. Israel had no such conception of God: in her forms of worship she still deals with One who is distant and unreconciled. Hence when, in confessions and prayers offered during the Ten Days of Penitence with which the New Year opens, the Jews call upon "*Our Father, our King*,"¹ and do so over forty times in rapid succession, it is without any such thoughts as are quickened in the Christian mind by the mention of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—THAT FATHER WHO HAS BEEN BROUGHT NIGH BY THE SON.

The "OUR FATHER" symbolises "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," as these are found in the standing and fellowship of believers: the *liberty* of the sons of God, the *equality* of such as are partakers of a heavenly calling, and the *fraternity* of those who have been made joint-heirs with Christ of the everlasting kingdom. These truths flow from the words of our Lord when He said: "One is your Teacher, and all ye are brethren; one is your Father, which is in heaven; one is your Master, even the Christ" (Matt. xxiii. 8-10). Here, moreover, we touch the foundation of the Apostolic word, that we are 'members one of another' (Eph. iv. 25).

¹ See Singer's edition of DAILY PRAYER BOOK, pp. 55-57.

CHAPTER VII

THE INVOCATION

II. "WHICH ART IN HEAVEN"

The Father's Glory and Power—Filial Reverence and Confidence—The Doctrine of the Invocation.

IN Matthew's Gospel the Invocation is extended by words designed to qualify the Fatherhood as HEAVENLY. In Hebrew composition, various means are employed to reduce the use of adjectives, as we know them. One method of expressing qualification without the direct use of an adjective is illustrated in the Invocation of the Prayer: the phrase "which art in heaven" is employed to indicate that He who is FATHER OF US is also, and in reality, HEAVENLY. That the literal rendering of the second substantive is "the heavens" (plural) requires no laboured remark, for the Greek *ouranoi* stands for the Hebrew *shāmayim*, which is never found in the singular number.¹ Let it

¹ The plural form *ouranoi* is used most frequently in Matthew, and uniformly in the phrases "Father which is in heaven" and "the kingdom of heaven"—(the heavens). As elsewhere, however, so also in Matthew, the singular form (as it appears in *v.* 10) is found in contexts where

be understood, however, that the primary object of the phrase is to designate the Father as the HEAVENLY One: therefore, as Bengel quaintly observes: GREATEST AND BEST—*Maxime et Optime*, the Latin invocation to Jupiter!¹

Once more we find in the Prayer a thought that was by no means strange in Israel. In the Old Testament writings Jehovah was represented, not only as "Maker of heaven and earth" (Ps. cxv. 15, cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8, cxxxiv. 3, cxlvi. 6; Isa. xxxvii. 16) and "Possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. xiv. 19, 22), but also as "the God of heaven" (distinctive in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel); and it was the confidence of His people that, in the most desperate circumstances, personal and national, He would "hear them in heaven His dwelling-place" (1 Kings viii. 30 ff.; 2 Chron. vi. 21 ff.). Hence, in Jewish literature, we find a corresponding form of speech.² Said Rabbi Akiba: "Happy are ye, O Israel! Before whom do you purify yourselves? Who purifies you? Your Father WHICH IS IN HEAVEN." Other occurrences of this form of expression are:

"On whom are we to lean? On our Father which is in heaven." "Our Father, which art in heaven, deal so with us as Thou hast promised by the prophets." "Be bold as a leopard, and swift as an eagle, and fleet as a hart, and strong as a lion, and do the will of thy Father which is in heaven."

"heaven" is viewed in contrast with "earth," or as sharply distinguished therefrom, *e.g.* in chaps. v. 18, 34, 35, vi. 19, 20, xi. 25, *et al.*

¹ GNOMON NOVI TESTAMENTI: Comment on Matt. vi. 9.

² See the Jewish Service Books; Dr. Charles Taylor's SAYINGS OF THE JEWISH FATHERS; and Lightfoot's WORKS, Pitman's edition, vol. xi. p. 144.

In Morning Service in the Synagogue worship there is an address to "the Lord our God in heaven and on earth," with the following clause: "Our Father which art in heaven, deal kindly with us for the sake of Thy Great Name, by which we are called," etc. The Daily Prayers also include such forms as "May it be the will of our Father who is in heaven, to have mercy upon us," etc.

Thus we find the Prayer to open with a glorious address, an uplifting Invocation, which, though truly wonderful in its full meaning, was certainly quite easy of apprehension. No Israelite in any degree familiar with the sacred terms of his language could be confounded by the Invocation; but, rather, thoughtful minds must inevitably be charmed with the grace which it embodied. There was no longer need for worshippers to stand at a distance, and, in fearsome awe, to say, "O Lord, O God"; but such could now come near and say, "Father," "*Our Father*," "OUR HEAVENLY FATHER." The Divine Being, in great condescension, takes the creature into His confidence and love.

The Father's Glory and Power.

"Who art in heaven." That is, "the High and Lofty One that Inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy"—yet *Our Father*. Let us recognise in the words (1) a reference to the glory of Him who is the Object of our praise and the Author of all the good that we may desire or request in prayer. Though occupying the supreme place in the universe, yet He is *Father of us*, and intent upon purposes of blessing for those who make Him their trust. Thus the Prayer opens with an upward look, and that look is sustained to the end. Before suggesting a single petition to His

followers, the Master bids them consider the Majesty of Him to whom they pray. In the words of F. D. Maurice:

As if He had said: Do not think that I am come to make your thoughts of God less awful than those of Moses were, when he put his shoes off his feet and durst not behold; than Solomon's were, when he said, "He is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few." The revelation of the Divine mystery in Me is not given that you may entertain it better in your low carnal hearts, that you may mingle it more with the things which you see and handle, that each of you may have a warrant for the form of idolatry which is dear to him. This revelation is given that the mystery may be no longer one of darkness, but of perfect light—light which you will enter into more and more as your eyes are purged, but which, if it colour the mists of earth for a moment, will at last scatter them altogether.¹

We may also recognise in the words (2) a reference to the Power of Him who, throughout the ages, has been known as the Hearer of Prayer. Free from human weakness and failure, He is equal to all the demands that may be made upon His grace and goodness. In the words of *The Shorter Catechism* (Qu. 100) the Preface of the Prayer "teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, ABLE AND READY TO HELP US." When, therefore, we say, in words given by our Lord, "which art in heaven," we assure ourselves that the One to whom we make appeal is able to fulfil our every need and desire. Dr. Glover has a stimulating thought on this point:

Fathers on earth cannot always help us; they are on our level; themselves enfeebled and perplexed. But when Jesus

¹ SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Sermon I.

says, "Say, Our Father which art IN HEAVEN," He raises our view to the greatness and the power of God. There, in heaven, He has leisure to help us. He has the infinite perfection that leaves Him free to bear the burden of others. He has the resources from which He can supply our need, and the place of vantage from which He can influence all that happens. Thus the opening word, rightly dwelt on, kindles all higher feelings and hopes; and when we linger over the Great Name till we learn its meaning and believe its promises, we can then ask, without lightness and without despair, for all the great things God wants to give and we need to get.¹

Filial Reverence and Confidence.

Thus, in its completeness, the Invocation inspires love and confidence, excites submission and fear. The Father is not only willing to bless us, but also able to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." He is OUR HEAVENLY FATHER; and in the very context of the Prayer, as given in St. Matthew's Gospel, disciples of Christ are explicitly taught to trust without questioning, to serve without dissimulation, that same FATHER which is IN HEAVEN. And if the glory and honour of our Heavenly Father, the true fear of God, has become a reality in our daily life—in times of trial and difficulty no less than in times of ease and comfort—then shall we be able, in the spirit of sincere worship, to pray in the words of the Divinely-appointed Invocation.

As we might expect, in view of the great comprehensiveness of the Prayer itself, there is an unfathomable depth of meaning in the Invocation. A recent writer, Dr. J. D. Jones, has ventured the judgment that the Gospel in its glory and beauty is in the phrase, which, whatever else it teaches, shows that LOVE is on the THRONE. He relates a striking incident to show how

¹ LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lect. I.

helpful the Invocation proved to a lonely Chinese convert :

I remember hearing my friend, Mr. Hopkyn Rees, one of our devoted Chinese missionaries, telling about one of his converts in that far-off land, who had to bear much from heathen relatives when she became a Christian. They beat her, locked her up in a room, and tried to starve her into surrender. How do you think that poor woman sustained herself? I will tell you. By the thought that her FATHER was IN HEAVEN, and that "all would come right." Mr. Rees had translated an old Welsh hymn into Chinese, the last line of every verse in which runs : "*Fy nhad, sydd wrth y lliw.*" It cannot sound as sweet in any other tongue, but this is a rough translation, "My Father's at the helm." And that was the song that poor woman sang day after day—"My Father's at the helm." Yes! He's at the helm! Let not your heart be troubled! "Your Father's at the helm."¹

The true attitude of prayer is one of lowliness in the presence of Him who is not only God, but FATHER; in the presence, moreover, of Him who, as to His Fatherhood no less than His Godhood—if we may thus consider in detail His perfections of power and grace—is great, glorious, almighty, holy, benevolent, all in a complete, harmonious, and sublime embodiment. And should we not find in the thought that now engages us a warrant of strong and unwavering faith, and a reason why we should "pray without ceasing"—that is, not faint in our prayers? "Father's at the helm"—IN HEAVEN.

Accordingly, as we approach the Omnipotent in such language of submission as the Invocation of the Prayer represents, we confess ourselves to be poor and needy and weak, pleading for His forbearance while we praise

¹ THE MODEL PRAYER, p. 42.

His Name, suing with confidence for His mercy while humbly lisping the desires of our hearts.

The Doctrine of the Invocation.

There is a marvellous simplicity in the doctrine of the Invocation. This aspect has been dealt with by Dr. Saphir as follows :

1. God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him the Father of all who believe in the Saviour.

2. Jesus is the First-born among many brethren, Head of the Church, the Centre of union. In Him we say "*Our Father.*"

3. Jesus has opened to us heaven, the holy of holies ; and, risen with Christ, we seek now the things which are above, we pray to our Father *in heaven.*

4. It is by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us as the Spirit of the Son, that we cry ABBA, and call JESUS LORD.

The words, "Our Father who art in heaven," contain the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Redemption and adoption are the two pillars upon which they rest.¹

If this is so, then what can be said in justification of the "legal ground" which some have attributed to the Prayer, as one result of a misinterpretation of the petition for Forgiveness? "Our Father!" Surely the words speak of the Home, not of the State, still less of the Palace of Justice; they proclaim on the part of the suppliant the attitude and spirit of THE SON, not of the servant or the subject. Doubtless, in some respects, the son may act both as servant and subject; but these relations are not indicated in the Invocation, nor shall we find them in any clause of the Prayer.

To say "Our Father," as in the Prayer, in vocative

¹ LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lect. III.

phrase, was, as we have seen, a privilege unrealised to those who, before the coming of Christ, occupied "legal ground"; yet, on the other hand, it is the distinguishing privilege, yea, part of the high calling, of those who, in Christ, have been graciously admitted into the household of God. And that the Father is described as HEAVENLY in no way qualifies the view that the Prayer belongs to the Dispensation of Grace. In fact, this glorious extension of the Invocation emphasises the majesty of the grace whereby, having been blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," the suppliant is permitted to approach the Father with the liberty and confidence of a son.

In the words of Martin Luther: "The little word 'Father' lisped forth in prayer by a child of God, exceeds the eloquence of Demosthenes, Cicero, and all the most famous orators the world has ever known." Our own Hugh Latimer also was right when he said: "This word 'Father' signifies that we are Christ's brothers, and that God is our Father." The first lesson of the disciple of Christ begins with this tender word; and at the end of a lifetime of following his Lord and Master, he has not learned enough to dispense with it.

In how many instances, as the wasted frame has become tired of the things of earth, have saints of God found support by uttering the familiar appeal! Being no longer able to pray with the Church, in the plural number of the pronoun, these have said, in the loneliness of death, and without presumption—"My FATHER!" Thus, while the earthly man has perished, the inward man has been renewed. Here we recall that the last words of Dr. John Gill were: "O my

Father, my Father ! ” ; ¹ that Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, as the end approached, said : “ My work is done ; I have nothing to do but to go to my Father ” ; ² and that Dr. Thomas Chalmers, the night before his death, while walking in his garden, was overheard by one of his family to say, in low but very earnest tones : “ O Father, my Heavenly Father ! ” ³

Many centuries have passed since the Lord Jesus taught His followers to say “ Our Father.” The lapse of time, however, has brought no invocation to equal this in beauty or strength. Indeed, as we “ increase in the knowledge of God,” do we not find the simple address ever more sweet and blessed ?

Hereby, as by no other form of invocation, we realise the dignity that is ours as sons of God. Hence we delight to say :

OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

¹ Middleton's *BIOGRAPHIA EVANGELICA*, vol. iv. (1786), p. 458.

² *LIFE AND TIMES OF SELINA, COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON*, vol. ii. p. 502.

³ Dr. Hanna's *MEMOIRS OF CHALMERS*, vol. ii. p. 775.

CHAPTER VIII

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

The Missionary Prayer—The "Name" of God—Hallowing the Name—In Many Words—The "More Excellent Way"—Personal Bearing of the Petition.

AFTER the Invocation come the Petitions. And how shall these be ordered by the reverent disciple? Will he, without hesitation or delay, proceed to urge his personal desires or needs? Nay; that, assuredly, were not to realise the Divine order. In prayer, as in other acts of worship, we must place GOD first; we must be occupied at the outset with the Holy One to whom we address our petitions. In other words, before considering our own circumstances, temporal or spiritual, we must meditate upon the glory, and contemplate the mighty purposes, of Him who has been revealed to us as FATHER.

Hence the Prayer opens with a series of petitions that relate to God—petitions which obviously include the elements of benediction, and are designed to evoke the warmest devotional feelings of the suppliant. We say, "Hallowed be Thy Name," and then express a desire for the coming of the Kingdom and the universal

prevalence of the Divine Will—"as in heaven so on earth." When the Kingdom comes and the Will is done, then the Name of God will be sanctified in the sight of the entire creation. The thought is stimulating in the highest degree; the disciple is exercised in regard to the glory of God, and intuitively realises that he is a propagandist—in other words, a missionary. Accordingly, the first petition has been designated, and rightly so, "fundamental."

Let us first (with St. Chrysostom) observe the direction we hence receive, in all our prayers, to have a prime and principal regard to the glory of God; not seeking anything concerning our own good before His praise. . . . By a rare complication, this sentence doth involve both praise and petition; doth express both our acknowledgement of what is, and our desire of what should be; we do hereby partly acknowledge and praise the super-eminent perfections of God above all things, in all kind of excellency, joining in that seraphical doxology, *Holy, holy, holy*; confessing with the heavenly host in the Apocalypse, that *He is worthy of all honour, glory, and power*: we do also partly declare our hearty wishes that God may be everywhere had in highest veneration; that all things relating to Him may receive their due regard; that all honour and praise, all duty and service, may in a peculiar manner be rendered unto Him by all men, by all creatures, by ourselves especially.¹

The Missionary Prayer.

Thus we see that, as the disciples were missionaries, so the Prayer was obviously designed for the use of such. The opening section (Matt. vi. 9b, 10), consisting of three petitions, deals with the ever-advancing Cause of God, as it should lie near the heart

¹ Isaac Barrow, EXPOSITION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER: Works, ed. Hamilton, vol. ii. pp. 553, 554.

of all disciples of Christ. The remainder (*vv.* 11-13), as we shall find in due course, deals with the personal requirements, daily and practical, of the workers themselves. We have already observed that the disciples were chosen, or appointed, by the Master, for this very service—"that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach" (Mark iii. 14). Christ's preaching, as we know, was "the Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35; Mark i. 14, 15; Luke iv. 43; cf. Matt. xiii. 19); and He gave to His disciples the same message—"He sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 2, 60). And to men who were missionaries He gave a missionary prayer.

"Hallowed be Thy Name!" This was the primary desire of the disciples, as they called upon the people to receive Him whom the Father had sent, to acknowledge as the Messiah Him with whom they were associated as attendants or followers. To believe on Him upon whom the Father had set His seal, was to honour God, to hallow His Name. Hence the plea that this might be manifest on all hands! By and by, as we shall see, in compliance with further instructions received from their Master, these men will come to other issues; and, making them likewise the subject of prayer, will seek from the Heavenly Father such food, forgiveness, and protection as were assured to them among the "all things" that were added to those who might "seek first God's Kingdom and His Righteousness." These issues, moreover, are equally real to modern missionary experience.

The petition was in substantial harmony with Jewish conceptions as built on Old Testament instruction. Our Lord's contemporaries, as frequenters of Temple and Synagogue, knew what it was to "hallow the

Name of the Lord"—in language at least. One of the forms of "vain repetition," to which they were religiously committed, was a "piling up of words" in eulogy of the Most High. Now, at length, the disciples are to realise that the honour and glory of God—their Father in Heaven—was to be the prime concern of their lives, also to be the subject of the first petition in the Daily Prayer ordained by their Master and Lord. As pilgrim-evangelists, or missionaries, this must have been in accord with the warmest desires of their hearts.

The "Name" of God.

The "Name" of God stands for GOD Himself. "Holy and reverend is His Name." There is no need, in this connection, to canvass the teaching of the various designations by which the Creator of all things and the Redeemer of Israel was known in Old Testament times. Some of these excited feelings of fear; some feelings of love. If God, the Maker of heaven and earth, was a Rock of Refuge to His people; so also Jehovah, the Guardian of Israel, was a High Tower into which those who trusted Him might run and be safe. Israel had no God but Jehovah—in other words, Jehovah was the God of Israel. Among the heathen, different names might represent distinct divinities, as the heathen mind conceived such to exist; but not so in Israel. To faithful sons of Abraham there was but one God, who at different times was known by various titles of honour, various names expressive of His omnipotence, His ineffable nature, and His distinguishing attributes. By particular designation, God was JEHOVAH; in the fullness of time, He was known as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

As a Hebraic conception, THE NAME of God was not a mere appellative, expressed in a word and spoken with the mouth; but rather it was the sum of all the ideas that were entertained regarding the Most High, so far as these had been revealed and made known, and so far as men were able to appreciate and confess them. Into the depths of Deity no mind can penetrate; and what God is in His essence no creature of the dust can find out. Revelation, however, makes known that which man cannot ascertain for himself; hence, the words of Christ, in prayer to the Father: “I manifested Thy NAME unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world. . . . I made known unto them Thy NAME.” In days antecedent to those in which the supreme revelation was given, God made Himself known by the words and works of Moses and the Prophets, also by mighty deeds in the interests of His chosen people. Accordingly, we read (for instance) that He put forth His power against Pharaoh, “that His NAME might be published abroad in all the earth”—*i.e.* that the nations of the world might know of His Divine majesty (John xvii. 6, 26; Rom. ix. 17).

As we have said, THE NAME stands for God Himself. Another development of thought and usage, arising from this fact, was for the Divine attributes and character to be regarded as shared by THE NAME. Thus, in due time, JEHOVAH and THE NAME became synonyms; and in Rabbinic reverence it became the custom, when “HA-SHEM” (“the Name”) was *expressed*, for the Tetragrammaton, or YHVH (Jehovah), to be *understood*. In harmony with this, in the Jewish work known as *Pirqué Aboth*—“Ethics of the Fathers”—we read of THE NAME, also THE NAME OF HEAVEN (or “Heavenly Name”), both of them used as terms for

JEHOVAH, the God of Israel.¹ The elements of this safeguarding of the Divine Name were thought to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures, in Lev. xxiv. 11, 16, where to speak against Jehovah is described as "blaspheming THE NAME"; and, in Deut. xxviii. 58, where we read of "the glorious and fearful NAME—THE LORD THY GOD."²

It is, moreover, customary in the Old Testament to associate various acts of piety and service with THE NAME of the Lord.³ Thus, we repeat, THE NAME became a familiar periphrasis for Jehovah Himself; and, as a result, it was a saying among the Rabbis: "A benediction that does not mention THE NAME is no benediction at all."

Hallowing the Name.

It is a trite remark that the Name of God—that is, God Himself—is *holy already*, that, in His essential being, He is holy, just, and good, and *cannot be more*

¹ See edition in Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK—as to "THE NAME," iv. 5, v. 11; as to "THE NAME OF HEAVEN," i. 11, ii. 2, 17, iv. 5, 14 (twice), v. 20 (three times).

² The Hebrew word *nāqav*, as found in the passage quoted from Leviticus, and there rendered "blaspheme," also meant "to call by name" or "specify"; and, giving exclusive preference to that signification, the Rabbis read into the verses a prohibition of *pronouncing with plainness* the Divine Name, YHVH, and built thereon quite a system of circumlocution.

³ For instance: to *speaking for God* is to "speak in His Name" (Deut. xviii. 19, 20; cf. Jer. xiv. 15); to *praise God* is to "bless His Name" (Ps. xcvi. 2, c. 4, cxlv. 1, 21); to *worship God* is to "call upon His Name" (Gen. iv. 26, xii. 8; Ps. lxxix. 6, cv. 1, cxvi. 4, 13, 17; Isa. lxiv. 7; Jer. x. 25; Zeph. iii. 9); to *serve God* is to "love His Name" (Ps. v. 11, lxix. 36, cxix. 132); while the place where God met His people in the convocations of sacred worship was "the place which He chose to put His Name there" (Deut. xii. 5, xvi. 2, xxvi. 2). "They who know THY NAME will put their trust in THEE" (Ps. ix. 10; cf. xx. 7).

so. Needless to say, the petition now under consideration is not concerned in any way to qualify such a self-evident truth. Neither is it designed, explicitly or implicitly, to *enunciate* the holiness of God: the disciples were not in need of primary instruction on that point. As a fact, the mood of the clause—as well as that of the two which follow—is not indicative, but *imperative*; and thus the petition must be viewed as speaking of the reverence that is DUE TO GOD, of the honour and glory which mankind at large SHOULD ACCORD TO HIM—and in the fullness of time will so accord. In other words, in the language of Samuel Rutherford:

We pray that God would make all men know and glorify Him in His holy nature, word, and works; and that we may glorify Him by a holy life, and that His enemies that dishonour Him were confounded.¹

In an elementary sense of the word, to hallow God's Name is to speak well of Him from the heart, to praise Him with sincerity; but from this there could not but grow the more practical conception of glorifying God in the life, representing Him before the world as HOLY, the sole object of worship, the supreme object of devotion and love. The God of Israel demanded this in the Decalogue, the first three “words” of which were designed to assert the claim of Jehovah, not only to the praise, but also to the undivided adoration of those whom He had brought out of the house of bondage (Ex. xx. 3–7). The difference between the first three commandments of the Decalogue and the first petition of the Prayer is formal rather than substantial, and is

¹ “The Sum of Christian Religion.” From Dr. Mitchell's CATECHISMS OF THE SECOND REFORMATION, p. 209.

obvious at a glance: the Old Testament enactments are *negative*, the New Testament appointment is *positive*.

The Name of God was hallowed, sanctified, shown to be holy above anything that was allowed to other names in heaven or earth, when God's people were true to the terms of their covenant with Him; in fact, the nation of Israel was set apart, consecrated, and itself treated as holy unto the Lord, with the express purpose of this moral and spiritual service being rendered (Lev. xxii. 32). On the other hand, the name of God was profaned, made common, and treated as if Jehovah were like unto the gods of the nations round about, when His people were unfaithful in the discharge of their covenant obligations, and walked in the ways of other peoples—as we should say, “the world.” To fear the God of Israel, to render pious obedience to Him—this was to hallow, or sanctify, His Name (Isa. viii. 13, xxix. 23). When such devotion was withheld, God vindicated His honour by judgments, and thus brought about what His people failed to accord—a sanctification of His Holy Name. In the words of Rutherford, just quoted, He “confounded” those that “dishonoured” Him.

The Jewish people did not fail, in some degree, to profit by the teaching of Moses and the Prophets on the subject of hallowing the Name of the Lord. In liturgical compositions that have come down to us from early times, and in others constructed after like models, there are many examples of forms of benediction intended to sanctify, or hallow, the Name—in word, at any rate. Israel could praise God in majestic terms, and could say, in the course of eloquent prayers: “We will hallow Thy Name in the world, even as they hallow it in the highest heavens.”

In Many Words.

As affording some idea of the terms in which THE NAME of God was hallowed in public worship, we give two striking excerpts from the Prayers of the Synagogue. The first is the doxology, with responses, known as the *Kaddish* (or “Hallowing”), regarded with high esteem by the Jews. The fact that it is substantially in the Chaldaic (or Aramaic) dialect, is in favour of the presumption that it dates from pre-Christian times. The *Kaddish* is a Jewish celebration, in many words, of what our Lord expressed in two, when, using Hebrew, He said, *Yithkaddash Sh'mekā*, “Hallowed be Thy Name.”

And now, I pray Thee, let the power of the Lord be magnified, according as Thou hast spoken—“Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses; for they are from of old.”

Reader: Magnified and hallowed be His great Name in the world which He hath created according to His will. May He establish His Kingdom during your life and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, even speedily and at a near time; and say ye, Amen.

Congregation and Reader: Let His great Name be blessed for ever, and to all eternity.

Reader: Blessed, and praised, and glorified, and exalted, and extolled, and honoured, and magnified, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He; though He be high above all the blessings and hymns, praises and consolations, which are uttered in the world; and say ye, Amen.

Cong.: Accept our prayer in mercy and in favour.

Reader: May the prayers and supplications of all Israel be accepted by their Father who is in heaven; and say ye, Amen.

Cong. : Let the Name of the Lord be blessed from this time forth and for evermore.

Reader : May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life for us and for all Israel ; and say ye, Amen.

Cong. : My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Reader : He who maketh peace in His high places, may He make peace for us and for all Israel ; and say ye, Amen.¹

The second selection is from the Morning Service for Sabbaths and Festivals. The Reader of the Synagogue having taken the Scroll of the Law from the Ark, the following is said :

Reader and Congregation : Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

Reader and Cong. : One is our God ; great is our Lord ; holy is His Name.

Reader : Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together.

Reader and Cong. : Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty : for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine ; Thine, O Lord, is the Kingdom, and the supremacy as head over all. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool : holy is He. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His holy mount : for the Lord our God is holy.

Magnified and hallowed, praised and glorified, exalted and extolled above all, be the Name of the King of all kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, in the worlds which He hath created—this world and the world to come—in accordance with His

¹ Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK, pp. 75, 76. Note references to "the Name" ; and, in the second paragraph, to the "will" and the "Kingdom"—familiar Jewish conceptions, as the Lord's Prayer fully recognises. And in the third *Reader* paragraph, observe the words, "Father who is in heaven."

will, and with the will of those who fear Him, and with the will of the whole house of Israel: the Rock of Ages, the Lord of all creatures, the God of all souls; who dwelleth in the expanse above, who abideth of old in the highest heaven: whose holiness is above that of the living creatures [see Ezek. i., *passim*], even above the throne of glory [cf. 1 Sam. ii. 8; Jer. xiv. 21]. Now, therefore, O Lord our God, hallowed be Thy Name among us in the sight of all living. Let us sing a new song before Him, as it is written: Sing unto God, sing praises unto His Name, extol ye Him that rideth upon the heavens by His Name Jah, and exult before Him. And may we see Him eye to eye when He returneth to His habitation, as it is written: For they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. It is also said: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

May the Father of mercy have mercy upon a people that hath been borne by Him [cf. Deut. i. 31, xxxii. 11; Isa. xlv. 3], and may He remember the covenant with the patriarchs, to deliver our souls from evil experiences, check the evil inclination in those that have been carried by Him, grant us by His grace an everlasting deliverance, and in His beneficence fulfil our desires in salvation and mercy.¹

The “More Excellent Way.”

It was in such terms as these that the Jews celebrated the hallowing of the Divine Name. In prayers and praises, confessions and pleas for pardon, they multiplied words in a manner that in reality defeated the ends of serious devotion. In the days of the Prophets, the people were rebuked for drawing nigh unto God with the lips, while far from Him in their hearts; and our Lord condemned their foolish ways,

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 145, 146. Note again allusions to “the Name,” the “will,” and the “Kingdom”; and, in the midst of the longest paragraph, the words “Hallowed be Thy Name,”

placing them in the same category as the hypocritical practices of the heathen, who "thought they would be heard for their much speaking." Yet, along with all this, there was developed an awe of the Divine Name—the Distinguished Name which has come down to us in the form JEHOVAH—an awe which led the Jewish people to desist from uttering it, lest they should incur the guilt of "taking it in vain." Accordingly, in their dread, they adopted a variety of substitutionary terms, including HA-SHEM, "The Name."

To assert, or celebrate, the holiness of God, as in the Jewish Liturgy, is not the purpose of the petition; to enumerate the distinctive channels by which His holiness has been manifested among men, or the various manners whereby we may show an appreciation of the same—as is very general in commentaries and expositions—is equally wide of the mark. In effect, when we use the words, we say: "*Let Thy Name be hallowed*, even as we now proceed to ask for other manifestations of Divine grace and glory among men, in the Coming of the Kingdom and the Universal Dominion of the Will of Heaven." Thus, the petition is found to be a reverent plea that the Holy One may be recognised as such by those who are at present ignorant of Him, that the wide world may come to know—"Our Father which art in Heaven."

Accordingly, we pray here, not so much that our individual minds may be brought into subjection to the Divine Will, and glorify God in daily life—though, of course, this cannot be excluded from our thoughts—as that the Almighty may be pleased, by all and every means that He may see fit to employ, to bring men to hallow His Name, to cause them to honour Him; that "all people that on earth do dwell" may give unto God

the glory that is due unto His Name. In the words of *The Shorter Catechism*, “that He would dispose all things to His glory” (Qu. 101). On this point, we may consider the teaching of a sturdy expositor who has almost passed out of mind, Dr. John Gill :

He is sanctified by Himself when He makes a display of His perfections, as He does in all His works ; in the works of creation, of providence, and redemption, and particularly of His holiness and justice (Ps. cxlv. 17) ; and when He shows His resentment against sin, takes vengeance on it, and inflicts punishment for it : thus He says of Zidon and of Gog, that He shall be known that He is the Lord when He “shall have executed His judgments” on them, and “shall be sanctified in them” (Ezek. xxviii. 22, xxxviii. 16, 23). . . .

And in the use of this petition we pray that the glory of God may be more and more displayed and advanced in the world, in the course of His providence and the dispensations of it ; that His Word may run and be glorified, in the conversion and sanctification of sinners ; that there may be an increase of holiness in all His people ; and that all profanation of the Name of God among men may be prevented and removed.¹

Seeing, therefore, that the hallowing of the Name of God speaks of judgment as well as mercy, the petition cannot but have a profound significance for such as have heard the call to spread abroad the Gospel, to make known on all hands the Word of Reconciliation. Thus, no one who offers the Lord’s Prayer can be indifferent to the prevailing ignorance of God and contempt of His Word and Commandments, whether in the lands of Christendom or in “the regions beyond.” As we say “Hallowed be Thy Name,” our hearts go out in pity to those who know not God, and in longing that the Lord of the Harvest may “send forth labourers into His harvest.”

¹ BODY OF DIVINITY, edition of 1815, p. 693.

Personal Bearing of the Petition.

As the thoughtful believer takes the petition upon his lips, he must of necessity associate himself with its object. Hence, though praying, in the first place, for others—for the missionary work of the Church in the widest acceptation of the term, and the unfolding purpose of God as it relates to the whole earth—he cannot but express, in feeling if not in words, an earnest acquiescence in such sanctification of the Divine Name as the petition implies. Thus what is right and due, and will at length be realised, to the greater glory of God, becomes the immediate concern of the loyal follower of Christ, and a concern touching his own heart. Accordingly, in presence of the solemn petition, he brings his daily actions under searching scrutiny, and inquires what manner of person he ought to be in all holy living and godliness. Dr. Stanford developed this aspect of the clause as follows:

It is said of the glorified ones, who are before God in heaven, "His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His Name shall be written on their foreheads." The spirit of this petition—"Hallowed be Thy Name"—is, let it be so on earth, so that wherever His servants are, His Name may be seen. May His Name be in us, and on us, "known and read of all men"! Where we live, there, by the indwelling, formative life of Christ, the Manifester of the Father's Name, may that Name be hallowed through our lives! Most hallowed where the most of our lives have to be spent—that is, not in splendid places, but in common places.

You have, perhaps, to spend most of your own life amidst things for manufactory, things for cultivation, or things for sale; you are inclined to tell me that there are many small transactions in a sphere like yours, which I might call sins, but which are quite necessities as the world now is. Society has such claims,

business is so sharp, life is so rapid, competition is so frantically desperate, that if you were, in any sense of the phrase, to hallow God's Name in your secular occupations, you would not be able to go on for a twelvemonth. Then you are not able to feel ready for the day when “there shall be upon the bells of the horses, ‘Holiness unto the Lord’”; you are not able to feel that you are always priests, your working-dress priestly raiment, your working-place holy ground; you are not able to offer the Lord's Prayer.¹

As the OUR FATHER may be said by children of God of varying temperaments, so far as the present earthly constitution finds men, so also “Hallowed be Thy Name” should be the petition of all who in every place call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let THE NAME make us glad! Let it be, as one of the Puritans said: “Honey in the mouth, music in the ear, and fire in the heart.” Let the sanctification of the Name occupy a large place in our minds. The same Divine Revelation which teaches that “THE FEAR OF THE LORD is *the beginning* of wisdom,” inculcates in the Prayer a similar lesson by appointing “HALLOWED BE THY NAME” as *the first petition* of disciples of Christ: thus directing us to anticipate with joy the destined emancipation of the world from the dominion of sin, and the promised manifestation of the glory of the Kingdom of God.

And in an age when colossal crimes are committed in the name of Culture, and when great ones of earth are disposed to “frame mischief by statute,” it is the privilege of followers of Christ, though with unaccustomed accent perhaps, yet with completest confidence, to say:

OUR FATHER . . . HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

¹ THE LORD'S PRAYER, pp. 103, 104.

CHAPTER IX

“THY KINGDOM COME”

The Outlook of the Disciples—The Kingdom of God—The Missionary Note—The Gospel of Hope—Points to Observe.

HAVING prayed for the Hallowing of the Divine Name, the disciples of Christ—evangelists of the Kingdom, as we have already found them to be—were taught to give expression, in another brief petition, to the deepest desire of our hearts—“Thy Kingdom come.” That was a desire which, through the ministry of prophets, wise men, and scribes, had become rooted in the consciousness of the Jewish nation ; and which, from generation to generation, had been fostered from their earliest years in the hearts of such Hebrew children as had the advantage of a pious upbringing. In other words, when the disciples were instructed to announce the coming of the Kingdom—in some manner associating their message with the Master whom they followed—they were put to a task which stirred their hearts as nothing else could do.

In this particular also, the training of the Disciples had, in part, prepared them for the teaching of their beloved Master. Employing, no doubt, the Hebrew

language, our Lord used two words only, *Tabhō Malku-thekā*. As the men preached, so also they were to pray. They told the people that the Kingdom was at hand, had come nigh: now they were taught to call upon the Heavenly Father to hasten its full manifestation. Thus they commended to the blessing of God the message which they delivered day by day. And since then, in all lands and in successive generations, in varying terms, no less than uniformly in the Lord's Prayer, disciples of Christ have followed in the steps of the faithful men of Galilee: there has never been a time when, however they may have understood the words, believers have not combined to pray, “Thy Kingdom come!”

It were easy to treat this clause, and others likewise, without regard to the historical setting of the Prayer, though at the same time in a manner that would suggest helpful thoughts for life and godliness. Before venturing upon any such course, however, the expositor should make some endeavour to ascertain the primary meaning of the petition. And, at the outset, it is obvious that, as given to the first disciples, the words had a simple significance. The petition should be easy of comprehension even by those who know nothing of the latest utterance of prophecy and the profoundest teaching of the Master. The question is—“What did the disciples understand by the petition?” If we can ascertain that, then we shall appreciate the intent and meaning of Christ, who cannot for one moment be supposed to have given to His followers a puzzle-lesson in Prayer.

At a glance we see that the petition is concerned with a subject of hope rather than with one of realised enjoyment. We ask for that which we desire, not for

that which we already possess. The Kingdom, as contemplated in the Prayer, is a blessing belonging to the future, not a movement at present in progress. In a word, it is something TO COME—"Thy Kingdom COME!" To study the petition as dealing with a current development—in the believer, or in the Church, or in the world at large—may, it is true, yield stimulating thoughts for Christians in the twentieth century; but such procedure must, of necessity, make for an unreal interpretation of the clause, and render it difficult for us to gather its significance in the judgment of the disciples to whom our Lord actually gave the Prayer. It is, admittedly, quite right to seek the Divine blessing upon the work of grace among those to whom the Gospel is preached; but that does not appear to be the point of the petition before us.

The Outlook of the Disciples.

The disciples, as we know, were "looking for the Kingdom" (Luke xxiii. 51; cf. ii. 25, 38); and they followed One who would, as they hoped, in due time assume the Messianic parts and prerogatives foreshadowed in the Old Testament Scriptures (*e.g.* in Psalms ii., lxxii., and cx.). Though in some respects sadly mistaken, yet the disciples were justified in many of their expectations: for, as a fact, their beloved Master was indeed the Messiah, destined, in God's good time, to "take His great power and reign" (Rev. xi. 15-17). Not appreciating, however, the larger purposes of God, the disciples were slow to make allowance for dispensational "times and manners." As we remember, on one occasion, "they supposed that the Kingdom of God was immediately to appear"; and, again, after the Lord's resurrection, they promptly

inquired: “Dost Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” (Luke xix. 11; Acts i. 6). It is noteworthy that, in answering the latter question, our Lord administered no general rebuke to His followers for indulging Messianic expectations. He simply said: “It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority.” Having been taught to pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” these men might well contemplate, as assuredly they did, the time when rebels against God would lay down their arms, and say: “Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head over all”; and when “the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty” would be God’s, in a consummation that should evoke universal acclaim and praise (1 Chron. xxix. 11).

Such, in a word, was the outlook of the disciples of Christ; and the petition now under consideration—which has been called “the sun and centre” of the three which comprise the first section of the Prayer—was true to that bright outlook. The prospect was grand and glorious, and the Master wished His followers to know it, and likewise to pray for it. If, with their early training—as the outcome of national prejudice and racial pride—these men held narrow views of the Kingdom, then they were speedily disillusionised. With their Lord, the future was replete with purposes of grace, as well as projects of glory; for in virtue of His death, many who were far off would be “brought nigh,” and access to the Father in heaven would be established for such as, in the past, had been “alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of the promise” (Eph. ii. 11-18).

The Kingdom of God.

If, as we have seen, no Prayer was truly such without containing some allusion to THE NAME (Jehovah), the same conviction prevailed among the Rabbis in regard to the very attractive, the sublime, and the essentially concrete concern of THE KINGDOM. It was, indeed, an axiom of the Jewish schools, that "any benediction wherein there is no mention of the Kingdom, is no benediction at all."¹ To leave out all reference to the thought that God is King, and that, at length, by the hand of the MESSIAH, He will exercise universal dominion, would be to omit an essential element from Synagogue devotions. Hence, whatever else this petition may involve, on the surface it has a prophetic burden. In the words of Dean Alford :

The Kingdom here is the fulness of the accomplishment of the Kingdom of God, so often spoken of in prophetic Scripture ; and by implication all that process of events which lead to that accomplishment.²

The Jewish liturgy, as it has grown with the ages, has many prayers regarding the Kingdom and the King. God is praised as King of the nation, also as "Father and King" (or Royal Father). In the *Kaddish*, and elsewhere, the Reader says: "May He establish His Kingdom during your life, and during your days!" and the Congregation follows with the familiar words: "Blessed be His Name; the glory of His Kingdom is for ever and ever!" Prayers of this nature, for the revealing of the Kingdom, that it may speedily appear, have for many generations been

¹ *Ber.* 40b.

² GREEK TESTAMENT, Comment on Matt. vi. 10.

associated with the hope of Messiah's coming; and the Jewish Creed still runs (in clause XII.): “I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and, though He tarry, I will wait daily for His coming.”¹

The Kingdom of which the second petition of the Lord's Prayer speaks, is, of course, the Kingdom of the Father: it is “*Thy Kingdom*” in a prayer addressed to “*Our Father*” (see Matt. xiii. 43, cf. vv. 31, 38; xxv. 34, cf. v. 1; xxvi. 29; Luke xii. 31, 32). In other words, it is the Kingdom of Heaven (as mostly in St. Matthew's Gospel), and the Kingdom of God (as principally in the other Gospels).² This Kingdom was, as we have already seen, the great theme of the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. Having announced, even as did John the Baptist before Him, that the Kingdom was at hand (Matt. iv. 17; cf. iii. 2), the Master “went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom” (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35; Mark i. 14, 15; Luke iv. 43; cf. Matt. xiii. 19). In like manner, He sent His disciples to “preach the Kingdom of God” (Matt. x. 7, 8; Luke ix. 2, 60, x. 1, 9). Later on, as His ministry reached its close, our Lord intimated that: “This Gospel of the Kingdom must first be preached

¹ Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK, pp. 37, 67, 90.

² On grounds that need not be set out in detail, we hold that these expressions are synonymous. To render the former, with severe literality, “Kingdom of the Heavens” is to suggest an unwarranted distinction. As we have already pointed out, the Hebrew mind uniformly expressed the idea of “Heaven” in the plural—*shāmayim*; and in the Gospel according to Matthew—the specially Hebrew cast of which is universally recognised—this form has been transferred in the Greek—*Basileia tōn ouranōn*. In that same Gospel, however, there are occasional instances of the phrase “Kingdom of God,” e.g. (in the text followed by the Revisers) in Matt. xii. 28, xix. 24, xxi. 31, 43; also of “the Kingdom” absolutely, iv. 23, ix. 35, xiii. 19, xx. 21.

in the whole world, for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come"; and at the Last Supper He bade His disciples to look forward to the fulfilment of the ordinance of Communion in the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom of His Father (Matt. xxiv. 14; Luke xxii. 18-30).

When, at length, after Calvary and Olivet, the Apostles went forth and preached "Christ Crucified," the glorious note of the Kingdom was still maintained. The Lord of whom they witnessed had been raised from the dead, was seated at the right hand of power, and was coming again in the clouds of heaven.¹ Hence, like the preaching of the disciples in the earlier days, that which followed Pentecost had for its substance "things concerning the Kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3, viii. 12, xix. 8); the Apostles spoke of the Kingdom as a future inheritance (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, xv. 50; Gal. v. 21; Eph. v. 5; Jas. ii. 5); and they associated the same with the expected appearing of Christ—His return from heaven (2 Tim. iv. 1, 8). As we know, the Apostle to the Gentiles was no exception to this rule: he "testified the Kingdom of God and persuaded men concerning Jesus"; he "preached the Kingdom of God, and taught the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xxviii. 23, 31).

Thus we find, in the Apostolic age, a combination of terms at once attractive and expressive. The preaching of the Kingdom was associated with the things concerning Christ. Accordingly, another aspect of truth appears. As, in the Lord's Prayer, men besought the Father "Thy Kingdom come," so, in the

¹ Note the details: *Crucified*—1 Cor. i. 23, and ii. 2; Gal. vi. 14. *Raised*—Acts iv. 2, 33; Rom. i. 4. *Ascended into heaven*—Acts ii. 33, 34; Heb. i. 3, 13. *Coming again*—1 Thess. iii. 13, and iv. 16-18; Rev. i. 7.

spontaneous appeals of their hearts, they now said, “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. xxii. 20). As men had looked, or waited, for the manifestation, or coming, of the Kingdom, so they now came to look, or wait, for the coming, or revelation, of the KING—the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Mark xv. 43; Luke ii. 25, 38, xxiii. 51 with Matt. xxiv. 42, 46; Luke xii. 36; 1 Cor. i. 7; Phil. iii. 20; Tit. ii. 13; Heb. ix. 28). And did not our Lord explain in advance the meaning of His withdrawal from earth by Ascension into heaven, when He compared Himself to “a Nobleman who went into a far country, to receive for Himself a Kingdom, and to return”? (Luke xix. 12). Thus we see the promises of God become ever more full and glorious as His ways unfold; and in like manner the prayers of His people become more rich and definite as such people come to know more of the Divine purpose. Hence it follows that “Thy Kingdom come” includes or embraces, “Come, Lord Jesus.”

The Missionary Note.

Like other clauses in this section of the Prayer, the petition “Thy Kingdom come” is essentially missionary in its relations. We recall that, in the Olivet discourse, the Master declared that the Gospel of the Kingdom should be preached in “the whole world, for a testimony unto all nations.” The Great Commission, given after His Resurrection, was but an expansion of this; for we have seen how emphatically “the Kingdom” entered into the preaching of the Apostles, as described in the Acts and Epistles. Thus, we learn that, in the primitive Church, the Kingdom of God had its place in preaching as well as prayer. The fact that the Kingdom was *coming* implied that God had a contro-

versy with the race, and also proved that He was dealing with mankind in a manner which would eventuate in a vindication of His own Name and glory. And the men who thus preached were not only dispelling moral and spiritual darkness, but likewise directing the people—in the first instance Jews, then Jews and Gentiles alike—to look towards the Heavenly Light.

Accordingly, in the petition before us, request is made that the Light may speedily appear, that the conflict with sin and Satan may reach its issue without delay. This thought suggested no serious difficulty to the early disciples. Welcomed in some towns, and refused hospitality in others—their message received by some hearers, and scornfully rejected by others—these men were prepared to preach the Gospel in any place to which their Master might send them; and while thus obeying His command as to service, they joyfully accepted His instruction as to prayer. Anticipating the day of victory, they said: "THY KINGDOM COME!"

It is noteworthy that many who have not recognised dispensational distinctions, as these are usually understood, have not failed to see the FUTURE force of the petition. In the words of Mrs. Rundle Charles:

The Kingdom is always amongst us, and within us; and yet it is always to come. For something is, indeed, still *before us*, some "Divine event," some infinite Hope, transcending all that has yet come. This may, indeed, be vulgarised by our poor attempts to picture it, or our vain struggles to anticipate it. But while, in a sense, the Kingdom exists now within and among us, "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," in another sense it is very definitely yet to come.

Ever since Christianity began, since the Christ came, the

whole attitude of the race for those who receive Him is reversed. Instead of a tender looking back to a sun that has set, there is the looking forward to a coming Dawn. The Golden Age is in the future, not in the past. The world is travelling, not from the lost rivers of the Paradise of its infancy, but to the living fountains in the Paradise of the Holy City which is to come.¹

If the first disciples saw in the petition a realisation of the Hope of Israel, as viewed in the manifestation of the Messiah, so also those of later days—indeed, ourselves—may find in the words an assurance of the glorious appearing of Christ, His return from heaven. With them the Kingdom meant the coming of a God-sent Ruler for whom they had long waited: with us it means the revelation of the glory of One whom we know already, of One who has graciously called us friends, of One who, in the day of His triumph, will give us welcome in the Kingdom, and grant unto us to sit with Him on His Throne. This blessed confidence which we have in this late twentieth century, was equally the assured enjoyment of the earliest disciples, as we have already seen. Hence, the words of the petition anticipate the time when Christ shall put down all rule and authority and power; when men shall accord to Him, and to Him alone, “the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.”

Are we missionaries and evangelists, telling men of the redeeming work of God in Christ—that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself”? Are we engaged in setting forth the marvellous means whereby our Father in heaven has dealt with sin, and now receives sinners into favour through His beloved

¹ THE GREAT PRAYER OF CHRISTENDOM, pp. 50, 51.

Son? In these circumstances, we cannot commit our labours to the Divine blessing in more appropriate words than by saying, "Thy Kingdom come," *i.e.* hasten the day when grace shall make way for glory! Are we, on the other hand, weak in body, or hedged about by circumstances from which we cannot escape, and thus prevented from taking an active part in Gospel work? Then, even in such conditions, if we would pray God's blessing upon such as are able to speak for Him, or in His Name, we can have no better petition than "Thy Kingdom come!" At home or abroad, among unbelievers in heathendom or the unfaithful in Christendom, there is no plea more suitable, none more correct in the expression of wishes which are "according to the Scriptures," than the one now under consideration. Therein we pray in a manner which distinguishes the human agent from the Divine Cause. Pride and selfish preference are excluded, and carnal means are made to give place to spiritual ends. Whereas, in our weakness, we might say, "Bless US," or "Bless OUR work"—petitions that are not necessarily unacceptable to the great Searcher of Hearts—the Master shows us a more excellent way; He glorifies the desires of our spirits, and, associating them with the mighty purpose of our Heavenly Father, He teaches us to pray, "THY KINGDOM COME!"

The Gospel of Hope.

We are apt to think that, because the Jews looked for a glorious Kingdom and were mistaken, therefore nothing of the kind is in the Divine programme, as it will be executed in and through the Risen Christ. A variable philosophy may allege grounds for such a view; but the Holy Scriptures, as carefully interpreted, point

quite another way. We do well to remember that the New Testament, no less than the Old, is a book of outlook, and that we to-day, as well as believers in Apostolic times, are, in an important sense, “saved by hope” (Rom. viii. 24). Though expressly warned against being occupied with times and seasons, or speculating upon the day or hour of the Lord’s Return, we are encouraged to look forward, and to rejoice in hope of the coming glory (Acts i. 6 ; Rom. v. 2). And if we pray as our Master instructed us, saying, “Thy Kingdom come,” not a day will pass without the stimulation in our hearts of a warm desire to see His face, and to be ready when He shall appear.

We do well to bear in mind that every anointed king of David’s line, as given to Israel of old, was regarded as a pledge and augury that in due time God would send the MESSIAH—great David’s Greater Son. The promised appearing of such a Deliverer, and the coming age of blessing—being brought into association with the covenanted glory—invested with a peculiar significance every great national event, and thus made the predicted end to “approach,” or become sensibly “nigh at hand.” Similar assurances should encourage us to-day. The progress of the Gospel brings the Kingdom near. And so also does the prevalence of lawlessness: things that sadden, no less than things that gladden—all are “signs of the times.” When, therefore, we see the world in commotion, and witness gainsayings of unrighteousness such as seem to carry the day against words of grace and truth, even then we should “lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh.”

Looking for the Kingdom is right, as also is waiting for Christ. We should seek the Kingdom, first and

foremost; we should look for Christ—as a servant watches for his master's return from a journey (Matt. vi. 33; Luke xii. 36). And the hopeful endeavours of daily life—especially our labours in the Gospel—should compel us to think of Him continually, and to long for His Return. As, in classic history, every triumph of a Roman general achieved on the banks of the Tiber was a type, or prophecy, of the coming of Cæsar himself, so every achievement of faith, every triumph of devoted labour on the part of servants of Christ—whether at home or on a distant field—is a type, or prophecy, of things that will come to pass when the Lord shall be manifested in His glory, and take His great power and reign.

Among things that are beyond dispute in this—the Kingdom is on its way. We pray for it, in terms explicit and pointed, as ordained by the great Teacher of prayer. Accordingly, in the words of a recent writer :

It is a prayer to-day; but the time will come when the prayer shall be changed into praise, and we shall be able to say: "Thy Kingdom has come!" It has been coming for eighteen hundred years, and it is not here yet; but doubt not, despair not, faint not, it SHALL come. Men have called the visions such as Plato and Sir Thomas More have given us, of the Ideal State—"Utopias," "Nowheres," to mark their idea of those visions as fantastic, impractical, impossible. But let no one dare to call the Kingdom of God a Utopia. Let no one dare to say of the new earth which Christ foretold, that it is a vain, an impossible dream. To say that, is to deny the faith, and to be guilty of the great Apostasy. Do you say that the establishment of a kingdom of justice, and peace, and joy is impossible? I will tell you Nay. God is pledged to it, and He shall not fail nor be discouraged. . . . "The world is grey with morning light." Thy Kingdom come! It *must*

come; it *will* come. Its coming does not depend upon you or me, but upon the Risen and Exalted Christ. “The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands.”¹

Points to Observe.

We note three points of interest in studying the second petition:

(1) *The Petition was Early Misinterpreted.*—Among the Fathers there were many who quite misunderstood the Prayer. Men who had come into the Church from Western heathenism failed to appreciate the Israelitish circumstances in which our Lord gave the instruction; and in course of time they showed a disposition to overlay its teaching with ideas that could not have been in the mind of the Master. One of these ideas seems to have resulted from the confounding of the coming of the Kingdom with the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Accordingly, among writers who have been deemed heretical, and others of minor credit in Church History, there was a tendency to add to the Kingdom clause, or to substitute other words for the same. Hence there arose a petition in these terms: “Let Thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and purify us.”²

Taking various forms, and generally associated with the Prayer as found in St. Luke’s Gospel, this clause is obviously the result of misunderstanding. Not in the petition “Thy Kingdom come” are we to find an allusion to the work of the Holy Spirit, but rather in the clause which follows, namely, “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.” The bringing-in of the Kingdom, equally with the coming of Christ to inaugu-

¹ J. D. Jones, *THE MODEL PRAYER*, pp. 79-81.

² See the facts, in brief, in Tholuck’s *COMMENTARY ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT*, p. 316 ff.

rate its glorious *régime*, is the work of GOD. The doing of the will of God—this is the work of men, as they may be enabled by the Holy Spirit. Thus the sphere of the Spirit is most obviously recognised in the third petition of the Prayer, “Thy will be done!”

(2) *The Petition has a Relation to Israel's Hope.*—Those who have given attention to the ways of God as outlined in the prophetic Scriptures will not need to be reminded that the coming of the Kingdom will bring glory to God in the solution of the age-long Israelitish enigma. In the words of the late Dr. Nathaniel West:

The first made last by apostasy, becomes the last made first by recovery. The historic calling of Israel to mediate salvation to the nations abides uninvalidated, even by Israel's temporary unbelief and rejection. Israel's mission is not yet ended. The New Testament presupposes, all the way through, the literal truth of the unfulfilled prophecies of the Old with respect to Israel, and presents distinctively Israel, the Gentiles, and the Church of God, in the apocalypse of the coming glory. . . . More glorious than ever, Israel will appear to the nations of the next great world-historical epoch, in the Kingdom of God.¹

Thus, as we pray “Thy Kingdom come!” we anticipate the time when, in regard to the Scattered Nation, “the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain,” and when “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” (Isa. xl. 4, 5).

(3) *The Petition is Not Obsolete.*—On examination, it is obvious that, like other petitions in this section of the Prayer, the one before us is not a request for indi-

¹ THE HEBREW STUDENT (predecessor of *The Biblical World*), vol. ii. (1882-83) pp. 146-147.

vidual good and comfort, but rather is a plea for the manifestation of the glory of God, with attendant blessing coming upon all mankind. Like the Lord's Supper, this petition is “till He come”; and not until the Kingdom shall come will the Prayer be obsolete—“fulfilled in the Kingdom of God” (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 26; Luke xxii. 16).

Ages have passed since the Prayer was given, and still it is “Thy Kingdom come!” Generations may yet be born, but all the same the Kingdom is ever in view for such as believe in God and are assured that His purposes will mature in victory.¹ To Israel of old, and the disciples whose ministry was on the other side of Calvary, the words implied the coming of the Messiah. To believers since Calvary, to us to-day, the petition means the same—only more; for, the blended horizons of the Old Testament being sundered in the revelations of the New, we look for the RETURN of One who has already been manifested: in other words, we await Him who, in due course, will appear “A SECOND TIME, APART FROM SIN, UNTO SALVATION” (Heb. ix. 28). We have had Him in humiliation, and we long to see Him enthroned in glory.

The petition before us is one that should warm our hearts to-day. We lay our loved ones to rest with the prayer that God may be pleased, of His gracious goodness, “shortly to accomplish the number of His elect, and to hasten His Kingdom.” “Forgetting the things which are behind, we stretch forward to the things which are before.”

¹ And such a victory! For we have already seen that the clause “As in heaven, so also upon the earth,” qualifies this petition, as well as those that precede and succeed it.

"Far down the ages" the pilgrim Church has pursued her way, and the Prayer which was becoming for saints and martyrs of the past is completely suited to our own experiences. Accordingly, we sing with Dr. Horatius Bonar :

Thus onward still we press
Through evil and through good,
Through pain and poverty and want,
Through peril and through blood :

Still faithful to our God,
And to our Captain true ;
We follow where He leads the way,
THE KINGDOM IN OUR VIEW.

Hence, when we pray, we say with joy :
OUR FATHER . . . THY KINGDOM COME.

CHAPTER X

"THY WILL BE DONE"

The Will of God—"As in Heaven"—The Missionary Note—
A Heart-Searching Petition.

STILL our minds are occupied with things that concern the Divine glory. However much the disciple may be pressed in regard to matters that affect body and soul, the deeper emotions, which put GOD FIRST, must occupy him before all else in the exercise of prayer. As yet we ask nothing for ourselves, we find no place for *personal* desires or *temporal* needs; but we content ourselves with the expression of the inmost longing of our hearts, that the holy will of God may be done, may be performed, by all men, continually and everywhere.

The faithful Israelite—and assuredly there were none more sincere than those who left all to follow Christ, giving up possessions and yielding personal opportunities to share His loss and cross—thought much of the will of God. His prayers often took the form of "May it be Thy will, O Lord, my God," as he asked the Eternal to accept his ways and make them to express the Divine purpose. Hence in the petition

before us nothing is said about the ways of men ; but in terms that are at once bold and comprehensive, we are taught to ask that the will of God, our Heavenly Father, whatever it may be, and whatever it may involve, may be done, may be realised—"as in heaven, so upon the earth."

The clause before us marks a climax in the first section of the Prayer. Some have seen more in the words, and have declared them to express the dominant thought in the Prayer as a whole. In the language of another :

The petitions that precede lead up to this, and those that follow must be brought into harmony with it. We frequently use these words as if they were nothing more than a prayer of submission and resignation in the day of sorrow, an echo of the Saviour's cry in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 39). And no doubt this is part of their meaning, and one of the uses to which they may be applied. They are a cry to God to enable us to bear what He sees fit to send, and to make us meek and patient under His chastening hand. But while this is implied in the petition, it is not its first intention. The added words, "as in heaven, so on earth," should keep us right here, since from heaven all sorrow and sighing have fled away. This is the Prayer of active rather than passive obedience, an obedience like that of God's angels, who excel in strength and do His commandments. Before we think of Jesus in the garden of shadows, we should think of Him as He sat by the well of Sychar and said to His disciples, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to accomplish His work" (John iv. 34). When we pray this prayer, we are asking that we and all men, being delivered from the spirit of wilfulness, may attain to a joyful alacrity like that of angels in doing the will of God.¹

¹ J. C. Lambert in Hastings's *DICTIONARY OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPELS*, vol. ii. p. 62.

The Will of God.

To the Hebrew mind, the will of God was the good pleasure, the delight, the holy purpose of the Creator, meeting no obstacles or hindrances in heaven, though opposed by sinful man upon the earth. That will was the joy of the righteous: hence the Psalmist said, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God," and again, "Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God" (Ps. xl. 8, cxliii. 10). Though sometimes viewed in contrast with or as distinguished from the will of man, the will of God was better expressed in conceptions that were heavenly, and therefore in terms that were magnificent and grand. A striking case of the Divine will being contrasted with the will of man is furnished in the familiar saying of one of the sages of Israel—Rabban Gamaliel, the son of Rabbi Judah the Prince, as given in the *Pirqé Aboth*, or "Ethics of the Fathers." He used to say:

Do His will as if it were thy will, that He may do thy will as if it were His will. Set aside thy will for the sake of His will, so that He may set aside the will of others for the sake of thy will.¹

That is to say, a life in harmony with the will of God is one that realises blessing on every hand. Not only does the Creator enter into the affairs of such a one, but He removes difficulties from his path, and even makes his enemies to serve his ends.

Needless to say, the great Teacher of prayer was an Exemplar in performing the will of God. His Father's will was His delight, and He spoke of its discharge as the veritable food which sustained His life (John iv. 34,

¹ *Pirqé Aboth*, ii. 4. Given in Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK, p. 187.

v. 30, vi. 38). With Him, indeed, the test of devotion was found in acquiescence in the will of God; and He declared that a willingness to do the said will would empower the conscientious inquirer to judge whether or not His teaching was of God or merely the utterance of a man (John vii. 17). Consistently with this, our Lord pronounced benedictions upon those who did the will of His Father (Matt. vii. 21, xii. 50; Mark viii. 35); and at length, when nature was all but riven in the conflict between human inclination and the holy will of God, He exclaimed with resignation, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt—Thy will be done" (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42). Hence there has come down the ages the significant testimony: "Christ also pleased not Himself" (Rom. xv. 3).

In the last hour of deep distress
Before His Father's throne,
With soul resigned, He bowed and said,
"Thy will, not Mine, be done!"

And, praise God, in some measure and degree the same spirit of resignation has been given to many followers of Christ. Old and young, great and small, learned and ignorant, have found delight in the Divine will. In life and in death, the saints of old said, "The will of the Lord be done!" With His will, there is His ever-sustaining presence. Hence, at the last, Montague Toplady could say, "The sky is clear: there is no cloud"; and Charles of Bala could declare, "I am in the Lord's hands, and He may do with me what He pleases. I have given myself to Him a thousand times." Further, James Montgomery could sing:

One prayer I have—all prayers in one,
When I am wholly Thine;

Thy will, my God, Thy will be done,
 And let that will be mine.
 All-wise, all-mighty, and all-good !
 In Thee I firmly trust ;
 Thy ways, unknown or understood,
 Are merciful and just.

"As in Heaven."

As we have seen, the opening clauses of the Prayer have a missionary character. They express the desires of the earnest propagandist, who wishes his God to be honoured by all men, who prays for that Kingdom which will not only usher in the glory of Israel but likewise bring blessings to all nations of the earth ; and who asks, moreover, that the Divine will, as shown in devotion to God, purity of life, and righteousness of dealing, may be universally performed. The three petitions "agree in one," and have a logical relation to the comparative extension, "As in heaven, so upon the earth."

Whether applied to all the petitions, or read as belonging only to the third, these words expressed an idea that was familiar to the Jewish mind. In the Psalms we read that "whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth" (Ps. cxxxv. 6). In the New Testament, on the other hand, we find the things which are ABOVE set in contrast with the things which are BELOW (see Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 10, 18). A well-known benediction in the Jewish liturgy was as follows: "May it be Thy will, O Lord our God, to make peace in the family above and in the family below" (*i.e.* in the family on earth even as the family in heaven). And a "short" (or inclusive) Prayer given by Rabbi Eliezer was in these words: "Do Thy will

in heaven above, and give rest of spirit to them that fear Thee beneath" (*i.e.* on earth). Thus, we may be sure, it was in words that were quite easy of comprehension that our Lord taught His disciples to pray that, as blessing comes upon earth through the acknowledgment of God and His claims, the same may, in itself, in its proportions, and in its consequences, be after a heavenly model—"as in heaven, so upon the earth."

Applied to the third petition, the comparative clause prays that the will of God may be done without restraint and universally. In the words of a seventeenth-century writer: "willingly, without murmuring; speedily, without delaying; constantly, without ceasing; universally, without omitting."¹ Or, to put the case another way, the petition contemplates lives brought into harmony with the Divine will, "that we may fly that Thou hatest, love that Thou lovest, and by Thee do that Thou commandest."² As such thoughts occupied the minds of the first disciples, the concern would be for the world of men and women ignorant of God, rather than for themselves. To say "Thy will be done" would, in fact, mean: "Assert Thy mighty rule, and command Thy glory in the midst of the nations of the earth." "As in heaven, so upon the earth." In the words of Dr. Saphir:

As the angels obey, so on earth God's will is to be done; but we desire that *now*, while waiting for Christ, we also may be enabled to render such obedience to our Father. The obedience of angels is in humility and in perfect submission. They obey because God commands. Thus ought we to

¹ Robert Hill, in *THE PATHWAY TO PIETY* (1629), Pickering edition, 1847, vol. i. p. 139.

² *Op. cit.* p. 141.

accustom and train our hearts to reverential obedience. While we experience that God's commandments are not grievous, and that Christ's yoke is easy, the authority of God is the foundation of all service. The Christian seeks to please his Heavenly Father; obedience brings glory to God, and a renewed assurance of our union with Christ.¹

The Missionary Note.

In the nature of things no one can pray in the terms of this petition unless, from the heart, he associates himself with the things of God as distinguished from the things of the present evil world. In this particular, the first three petitions occupy common ground. Thus, when we pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” we invoke, at least by implication, the Divine blessing on all endeavours to make known the Name and Will of God. How, again, can we pray in the words, “Thy will be done,” without being, at the same time, exercised in heart and mind regarding the multitudes who are “alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them,” and therefore enjoy no such spiritual comfort and support as comes to those who sanctify the Divine Name, no such joy as comes to those who hope for the manifestation of the Kingdom, no such purifying desire as is implanted by the Holy Spirit in those who are thereby led to do the will of our Father which is in heaven?

Apart from any systematic interpretation of the Prayer, this note has been detected in the early clauses by good men of bygone times. An instance is afforded in the life of Richard Baxter. When, toward the end of his days, that excellent man reviewed his career and opinions, he was struck by the deep purpose of the first

¹ LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lect. VIII.

three petitions. In the seventeenth century, no less than in the twentieth, there was distress of nations, such as could not but vex the souls of sensitive Christians. Yet whereas, in early life, Baxter was "wont to look but little further than England in his prayers," not considering the state of the rest of the world, later on he became otherwise minded. He wrote :

Now, as I better understand the case of the world, and the method of the Lord's Prayer, there is nothing in the world that lieth so heavy upon my heart, as the thought of the miserable nations of the earth. . . . I cannot be affected so much with the calamities of my own relations or the land of my nativity, as with the case of the heathen, Mahometan, and ignorant nations of the earth. No part of my prayers is so deeply serious as that for the conversion of the infidel and ungodly world, THAT GOD'S NAME MAY BE SANCTIFIED, AND HIS KINGDOM COME, AND HIS WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.¹

A Heart-Searching Petition.

Those who pray in the words, "Thy will be done," bring themselves under the influence of a heart-searching petition. No such words are required in a mere form : they proclaim their relation to a Prayer which was evidently given with a practical design. The man or woman who thus addresses the Almighty, asks, in effect, to be made "perfect in every good work to do His will"; and by consequence he or she will seek the glory of God in thought, word, and deed. The Lord does not say to us, "Look out for your personal requirements : Kingdom blessings will come in due time." No; but most emphatically He says, "Seek first the

¹ BAXTER'S LIFE AND TIMES, by William Orme, vol. i. p. 476.

Kingdom, and all other things shall be added.” And this we learn also in the Prayer.

Accordingly, in the Prayer—and, in fact, in all prayer—we must, in the first place, put our earnestness and sincerity into the petitions that relate to the Father’s glory. If we do that, then, before ever we come to the requirements that have to do with sustenance and pardon and protection, we shall find that these have been added. Before we call, our Heavenly Father will answer :

Make but His service your delight,
Your wants shall be His care.

Just here, we may discern a caution in regard to prayer. If it is our desire to do the will of God on earth, so we shall endeavour to consult His will in reference to the things that we ask at His hands. And it will not take us long to learn the lesson pointed by William Gurnall, that “we have not a liberty to pray at random for what we will.” The well-known Puritan adds :

We have to do with a wise God, who, to stop the mouth of such bold beggars as would ask what unbeseems us to desire, or Him to give, hath given us a law of prayer, and stinted us to the matter thereof: “When ye pray, say, Our Father,” etc. That is, learn here what you may pray for in faith to receive. “This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us” (1 John v. 14). Faith without a promise is like a foot without any firm ground to stand upon. It was well Luther interpreted himself when he said, *fiat voluntas mea*—my will be done—*mea, Domine, quia tua*—my will, Lord, because Thine.”¹

¹ THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOUR, Ryle’s edition (1865), vol. ii. pp. 332, 333.

Looking back upon the Godward petitions of the Prayer, we may fittingly ask whether, so far, we have found in the words employed any reason why they should be withheld from the people of God in this dispensation. Assuredly, we have encountered no "legalism": every thought has had its foundation upon the Fatherhood of God as revealed in Christ the Son.

In an age when the wayward will of man asserts itself in deeds that yield sorrow following upon sin, we cannot but judge how truly happy would be the case of our weak humanity if the petition now before us were granted in heavenly blessing.

Shall we not, therefore, with deepened meaning and uttermost sincerity, say :

OUR FATHER . . . THY WILL BE DONE ?

CHAPTER XI

"GIVE US . . . OUR . . . BREAD"

Jewish Prayers for Food—A Prayer for Sustenance—"Necessaries—not Luxuries."

THE Lord's Prayer is essentially practical: there is little or nothing that is mystical in its clauses. Its first part, as we have seen, is devoted to the eulogy of God, and the expression of adoring desire that His holiness, wisdom, and power may speedily find response in the hearts of all men. The second part, which is now to engage us, is concerned with food for the sustenance of the body, forgiveness of sin to the end that the heart may be at rest, and preservation from evil in order that the soul may realise a healthful moral and spiritual security.

At the head of this second series of petitions stands that for "bread." The priority is natural; and, if our interpretation of the Prayer so far is correct, no argument is needed to show that this petition deals with the daily support of the trustful child of God. In sending forth His disciples, as we remember, our Lord was explicit beyond cavil on one point: they were not to provide themselves with bread or with

means wherewith to procure it (Matt. x. 9 ; Luke ix. 3). Assuring them that the labourer is worthy of his meat—thus implying that their requirements would be supplied by a heavenly provision—Christ relieved His immediate followers of any anxiety in regard to daily bread : “ Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.”

Though the Greek word ἄρτος (*artos*) serves to describe a loaf of bread, it is not necessarily and exclusively such that is contemplated in the petition : rather, it is FOOD, any and every thing that may be needed for the sustenance of the body. Thus the Greek word is seen to cover the same ground as the Hebrew לחם (*lehem*), which, in a general sense, implied common and every-day food ; and hence served to describe corn, fruit, or manna ; fish, flesh, and fowl ; as God may give and men may receive. The Heavenly Father is the Great Provider ; and for His bountiful supplies petition is made in the clause now under consideration.

Our present study is more critical than some that have preceded ; and the deep and far-reaching importance of the particular point involved, necessitates a somewhat detailed examination of the terms. In a special degree we are concerned with the word rendered “ daily ”—a word which has long been designated “ the torment of theologians and grammarians,” and for well-nigh two thousand years has been subjected to discussion with results that are avowedly unconvincing. That a DAILY supply of food is sought is beyond question—in Matthew we read “ Give us THIS DAY ” (δός ἡμῖν σήμερον), and in Luke “ Give us DAY BY DAY ” (δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ’ ἡμέραν).¹ That, at the same time,

¹ Note variations, first in the verb, then in the adverb. With “ this day,” Matthew has δός, *second aorist, imperative*, “ give,” as in one act ;

in both forms of the Prayer, *i.e.* alike in Matthew and Luke, the bread itself should be qualified by a word conveying a precisely similar meaning—"our DAILY bread" (as in the common versions)—is quite another thing. A weak repetition such as is hereby suggested is, in fact, generally dismissed by reverent scholarship. Though the bread is asked for daily, it is manifestly described by a word bearing some additional meaning; but what the distinctive meaning of that word, *ἐπιούσιος* (*epiousios*), may be, has been the subject of keen debate from the beginning until now.

The clause which detains us reads: τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον, rendered "our daily bread," the same in both Gospels. At the outset, we do well to assume an obvious simplicity in the terms. By no means can it follow that, because Western scholars have lost their way, therefore the first disciples of our Lord were equally in a maze. To ask for bread makes but little demand upon the intellect. What holds good, in this particular, with us to-day, would also hold good two thousand years ago with men of the Galilean home and synagogue, living in the small world of Jewish thought and speech. By this petition, we must admit, they were led to think of the bread which is common-place, OUR BREAD; of the bread which we handle and eat, DAY BY DAY—the bread which we are encouraged to ask for, and in a way confident of receiving. On the surface, then, there is nothing to suggest mystery. Though an unsolved riddle with classical scholars, the word *epiousios* was assuredly no riddle with the Evangelists, who used it without any attempt at explanation.

"Our bread, this day (day by day) give us." Yet with "day by day" Luke has *δίδου, present, imperative*, "be giving," continually,

the bread is described by a strange adjective, and around this word disputation has gathered. While it is readily admitted that the Prayer as a whole, and in its distinguishing parts, brought the disciples into a new world of devotion, it cannot for one moment be thought that in one of its petitions there was proposed to them an expression with which they were unfamiliar. The Great Teacher was content to speak in language that was understood by His followers ; and we are not justified in concluding that the Evangelists failed in their endeavours to represent His intentions in their Greek memoirs of His ministry, and to do so with intelligent fidelity.

Jewish Prayers for Food.

To men who, according to Rabbinical rite, would have employed hundreds of words in asking for good and honourable maintenance, our Lord, in His "Fountain" Prayer, gave instruction in a form characteristically terse, telling them to demand of the Heavenly Father, in some half a dozen Hebrew words, all that they might require in regard to the bread that perisheth. In the Greek form presented in the Gospels, the petition is comprised in eight words in Matthew, in ten in Luke.

The old-time practice may with safety be gathered from the modern custom of the Jews, as the same finds expression in "Prayers for Sustenance." Here is a translation of one such composition :

My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.
Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the latter end of that man is peace. Trust in the Lord, and do good ; dwell in the land, and feed upon faithfulness. Behold, God is

my salvation ; I will trust, and will not be afraid ; for Jah the Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation.

O Sovereign of the universe, in Thy holy words it is written, saying, He that trusteth in the Lord, lovingkindness shall compass him about : and it is written, And Thou givest life to them all. O Lord God of truth, vouchsafe blessing and prosperity upon all the work of my hands, for I trust in Thee that Thou wilt so bless me through my occupation and calling, that I may be enabled to support myself and the members of my household with ease and not with pain, by lawful and not by forbidden means, unto life and peace. In me also let the Scripture be fulfilled, Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. Amen!¹

Going back a few years, we find a still longer form of words in common use among British Jews. Here is a translation :

O Thou, who providest sustenance for every creature, and suppliest raiment unto every being, thus dispensing to all the means of support, I humbly pray that Thou wilt grant me my maintenance with a bountiful hand—that Thou wilt sustain and support me and all my household, and all Israel likewise, with a good and bountiful maintenance, obtained in tranquillity and not in care, by legitimate and not by prohibited means, with honour and not with shame.

O grant me a maintenance to which there shall not be attached aught of humiliation or disgrace—a maintenance which shall not render me dependent upon the gifts of mankind, but which shall proceed from Thine own bounteous and wide-extended hand ; a maintenance which shall enable me to study Thy holy, pure, and perfect Law.

O grant wholesome and proper food in ample provision for me and my household, and supply our every want before we actually stand in need, that my heart may be freed from care, and enabled to occupy itself in studying the words of Thy Law

¹ From Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK, Morning Prayer, p. 87.

and in fulfilling Thy commandments. Suffer me to sit in peace and honour at my board, surrounded by the children of my household, and grant that I may never have need to look wistfully at the tables of others, nor to become dependent upon any human being.

Let me not be subjected beneath the yoke of mortal man, but be entirely under the yoke of Thy Kingdom, that I may serve Thee with a perfect heart. Let us always be clothed with decent raiment, that we may be sustained by a sense of honourable pride and not of shame. And do Thou deliver us from poverty, want, and degradation. Give me the means of showing hospitality to strangers, and of practising benevolence towards all men. Create for me the opportunity of doing charity unto the deserving, and grant that I stumble not through the demerits of the unworthy. Amen.¹

Note that these prayers are (generally) in the first person of the pronoun. They are punctuated with the "I," "my," and "me" of a personal desire. A different feature appears, however, in the Blessings, or Graces, before and after Meat, as they have been uttered by the Jews from early times. These are in the plural number—like the Lord's Prayer. In these forms, which are accommodated as to their wording according to the times and circumstances of life, God is blessed for the bountiful provision made for His people, of—bread, לֶחֶם (*lehem*); food, מֶזֶן (*māzon*); support, כֶּלֶלָּה (*kalkālāh*); and the general necessities of life, פֶּרְנָסָה (*parnāsāh*). In Blessings for use on various occasions another word is added to the list, namely, מִחְיָה (*miḥyah*), which means SUSTENANCE, that by which life is preserved.

Leaving details to be set forth in Critical Notes in the Appendix,² we content ourselves at the moment

¹ DAILY PRAYERS, translation by A. P. Mendes, Vallentine's JEWISH RITUAL, vol. xii. p. 89.

² See Appendix III. p. 232 ff., *infra*.

with the simple statement that, in the circumstances, the petition must be conceived in acceptable Hebrew before it can be brought forth in the Greek words employed by the Evangelists. In the way of such a course being adopted, there has stood, for many generations, the judgment of fathers and professors, to the effect that the word *epiousios* must have a TEMPORAL meaning. After the application of many tests, we have concluded that this judgment is fallacious; and we have found reason to maintain, on the contrary, that the word is QUALITATIVE, and intended to describe the bread in the light of its primary object and purpose.

A Prayer for Sustenance.

As we have seen, it is the custom of the Jews to pray for food and sustenance, also to bless God for the same before and after meat. Thus, far from standing by itself in such a connection, bread has a place in the general body of provision, means of subsistence, nourishing food, of which mention is made in Jewish formularies. What more natural, we ask, than that our Lord, in this petition, should regard bread in the light that was prevalent among the people (and for that matter is prevalent to-day) as THE MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE, and should encourage His disciples to pray day by day for the bread wherewith life is sustained? If, in their Blessings and Graces, the disciples already blessed God for "giving bread (לֶחֶם—*lehem*) to all flesh," and thanked Him "for the sustenance and for the nourishment" עַל הַמִּיּוֹחַ וְעַל הַכֶּלֶלָּה (*al ham-miyyah ve'al hak-kalkālāh*), repeating these words several times every day, it is assuredly quite reasonable to look for some such combination in the petition for bread.

After exacting processes of investigation, we have reached the conviction that the petition combined with *lehem* (bread) the familiar word *miḥyah* (sustenance), and that the two were intended to express one comprehensive idea — “our sustaining bread.” Either word would speak of sustenance, but the two together do so with emphasis. Thus, back of the Greek of the Gospel we find a Hebrew clause in these words: *אֶת לֶחֶם מִחְיַתֵּנוּ תֵּן לָנוּ הַיּוֹם* — words which, rendered literally, mean “The bread of our sustenance, give us this day.” This, beyond question, is good Hebrew; and at a glance one sees that the clause has a cadence which makes it eminently suited to such a compact formula as the Prayer is acknowledged to be.¹ The same cannot be said, however, of forms of words hitherto constructed to express in Hebrew the ideas of daily, morrow, continual, or allotted bread.

Yet, as must be admitted, the phrase “bread of our sustenance” (*lehem miḥyathēnū*) is not current English. It is essentially Oriental, and exemplifies an idiom which, when translated into a Western tongue, requires to be *resolved*. In place of two substantives, one of them expressing an adjectival idea, we should expect, in Greek no less than in English, a substantive with its qualifying adjective. Hence “the bread of our sustenance,” as we read in Hebrew, becomes in Western speech “our sustaining bread,” the bread for the preservation of life, THE BREAD ON WHICH WE EXIST.

Needless to remark, the Evangelists, writing in Greek, were in the habit of making use of adjectives in preference to handing on the Hebrew idiom. Accord-

¹ In Appendix I. (p. 213, *infra*) other suggested renderings into Hebrew are given; and see also Appendix III. p. 247, note).

ingly, we find, in the petition for bread, as given in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, a substantive and an adjective; and at a glance we see, in the light of the Hebrew construction now suggested, that the word *epiousios* DESCRIBES the bread: it is "our sustaining bread," the bread ON WHICH WE EXIST. There is *epi*, "on," and *ousia*, "existence." In fact, the word is a literal (indeed, *translational*) expression of such a Hebrew form of words as we have presumed to lie at back of the Greek clause. The substantive *artos*, bread, is qualified by the adjective *epiousios*, sustaining. Thus the idea of time is superseded by that of object and purpose; and the Greek may well be pronounced as clear as intelligence and inspiration could make it.

"Necessaries—not Luxuries."

Attractive, on some grounds, as is the view that we should find here an allusion to the heavenly bread, still the thought cannot be derived from the language of the clause, nor from the general purpose of the Prayer. The words deal with a common need as it is felt by the entire body of disciples; and thus, when teaching the Twelve, the Master gives a lesson to us all. Those who are engaged in His work may look to the Father for supplies. He will give strength to labour, and He will reward such labour with the things that are needed for the sustenance of daily life. It has been tersely said that "bread comprehends all the necessities, but none of the superfluities of life,"¹ In the words of another: "What we should wish, and what we have a right to ask from God, is what we *need*—no more and

¹ Andrew Fuller, EXPOSITION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, section 8; Complete Works, p. 492.

no less. This does not reduce us all to one level, but leaves Him to settle what we do want.”¹ To follow up this practical thought :

The model prayer is not complete without this petition. That means that we are to look upon all material good as God's gift. He can give it to us. We cannot secure it for ourselves. . . .

No man is living wisely who does not relate all earthly good to “Our Father in heaven.” The task for providing for yourself is the heaviest burden you can carry. You may labour hard, and secure such a paltry result—perhaps none at all ; and if your labour does secure a large result, you are haunted by the knowledge that at any moment the hoarded treasure may turn to ashes before your eyes ! . . .

But if we are to pray about this matter, we must modify our scale of expectations. A man ought to pray to God for the necessities of life, and may expect to receive them. No man has any right to pray to God for wealth or luxuries, though God may give them. The Christian life is a life of trust and love. Is it not ridiculous for a man to profess trust in God for his eternal welfare, and to show that he cannot trust God for his material welfare ?²

In every sense the petition suits the child of God—for children ask of the Father. Moreover, it suits the pilgrim, for like our Master “we’ve no abiding city here.” If, for the moment, we have bread, and money wherewith to procure more, it is only as stewards of the household of faith. The bread is OURS, the plural number indicating a store and interest in which the general body of believers have a rightful share. And so we should expect, for He who gives all is Father of all—“Father OF US.”

¹ Alexander Maclaren, EXPOSITIONS : Gospel of Matthew, ch. vi.

² J. E. Roberts, STUDIES IN THE LORD'S PRAYER, pp. 37-39.

Back of the loaf is the snowy flour ;
And back of the flour is the mill ;
And back of the mill is the sheaf,
And the shower,
And the sun,
AND THE FATHER'S WILL.

Having regard to the fact that scarcity of bread may afflict us as a result of “man’s inhumanity to man” no less than through some mysterious “act of God,” we mean much when we offer this petition.

In time of war, when we invoke the blessing of God upon our land and those in authority, we virtually support the petition for bread. And in precise terms, day by day, we say :

OUR FATHER . . . GIVE US THIS DAY
OUR SUSTAINING BREAD.

CHAPTER XII

“FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS”

“As we Forgive”—“The Lord’s Release”—The Prayer of the Child of God—The Practical Issue—The Believer’s “Quit-Rent.”

HAVING asked for food, the disciple of Christ now sues for pardon. In the words of Thomas Manton, the Puritan, we have “done with the supplications of the Prayer, and are come to the deprecations.” That is to say, we pass from petitions for the obtaining of good things at the hands of God, and bring forward those which are concerned with the removing of evil from ourselves.

As the *disciple* offers this petition day by day, it is clear that the words contemplate, not an unregenerate rebel seeking Divine acceptance, but rather a trustful worshipper desirous of continual cleansing. Though in times gone by the petitioner may have walked in the ways of sin, now it is his privilege to be in the school of a Teacher who leads in the path of holiness, and in that school he would be “without offence.” Hence the petition, for himself and others in like circumstances, “Forgive us our debts.”

The words, certainly the sentiments, were quite

familiar. Israel had learned the initial lessons in regard to sin and forgiveness. In St. Matthew's version of the Prayer we read of “debts”; in St. Luke's version of “sins”; while in the verses following the Prayer in Matthew's Gospel we read of “trespasses.” Between the words there are doubtless refinements of difference; but that difference is not fundamental. We are justified in regarding the “debts” and “trespasses” of Matthew as finding their explanation in the “sins” of Luke. Whether we fall short as debtors, or decline from the path of rectitude and thus are guilty of trespass, all our delinquencies come into the inclusive category of SIN; and for sins we are bidden to seek forgiveness.

Thus we are led, at the outset, to understand the petition as a constructive confession of faults which, if unforgiven, expose the offender to the penalty of the Divine law. These ideas were familiar to the Jewish mind; and the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament had adopted the Greek word *ἀφίημι* (“forgive”) as expressing the doctrine of forgiveness of sin and remission of the penalty incurred by a breach of law (see Gen. i. 17; Ex. xxxii. 32; Lev. iv. 20, v. 10, 13; Ps. xxv. 18; Isa. xxii. 14, lv. 7).

In the petition under consideration, with this same Greek word for “forgive,” we find a doctrine which may be expressed in three points: (1) that, though disciples of Christ, we are sinners, debtors to God; (2) that God is gracious, and willing to pardon our offences; and (3) that though, when coming to Christ as our Saviour, we may receive remission of sins that are past, yet there is need for daily cleansing—hence for continual prayer for pardon. In the words of a Puritan worthy:

We daily renew our sins by omission and commission ; and though the foundation of our pardon be laid in our regeneration, yet, that it may be actual and full for following sins, we must have renewed repentance, faith, and prayer.¹

Thus we see that, in words at once few and explicit, the entire body of Christian teaching as to sin and forgiveness is compressed in the petition before us. Who shall suggest that the implication is not adequate ? "Forgive us"—need we specify the offences, tell the tale of our deficiencies ? If it is true, as the Jewish doctors held, that "he that transgresses, though in secret, thrusts God away from him," so also is the converse true, that he that seeks pardon for his offences, with the desire to live a life of righteousness, draws God nigh unto him. And, assuredly, in this petition, pardon is asked in terms which are as comprehensive as human need can possibly demand. How different is this from the teaching of a Judaism which rejects Christ ! In the Synagogue service of the Day of Atonement, as we have seen, a thousand words or more are required wherein to specify sinfulness and to seek remission.² In fact, there is a piling up of words in the admission of what is already known to an all-seeing God ; and, moreover, this is done in the very spirit of the "vain repetitions" which our Lord reproved.

Contrast with this the teaching of the Prayer. When confessing sin to an earthly parent, the penitent may say, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight" (Luke xv. 21) ; but when asking pardon from the all-holy and omniscient God, direct confession is not required—hence it is not even suggested by the

¹ Richard Baxter, *THE CATECHISING OF FAMILIES*, chap. xxix.

² See pp. 33, 36, 37, *ante*.

Master. Confession in the heart is necessary: words with the lips may be dispensed with. Thus in the petition, “Forgive us our sins,” guilt is manifestly implied, though its measure is left with Him who will “abundantly pardon.” In one brief sentence, in one comprehensive imperative, our Lord provides us with confession (understood) and petition (expressed).

“As we Forgive.”

The extension, “as we forgive them that trespass against us,” has been somewhat misunderstood; in fact, by some the words have been so interpreted as to challenge the relation of the Prayer to the Dispensation of Grace! In other words, there has been found in the petition a pleading with God *on the ground of personal merit*; and by consequence it has been suggested that the disciples were, in these words, encouraged to expect Divine forgiveness BECAUSE, on their part, they had exercised clemency toward those who had done them injury! Hence a comment which takes the form, “This is legal ground.”

This view invests the words with a meaning which the Master cannot have intended, and, further, it evinces an extraordinary confusion of the principles of Law and Grace. Is it really disputed that Christ came to reveal the Father? and is it really held that He came to do work in the household of Moses? (see John i. 17). Impossible! Our Lord gave no instruction on “legal ground.” From first to last, on the contrary, He occupied GOSPEL “ground,” being engaged in work which had for its object the enlargement of the Jewish people into a truer and deeper liberty, in order to a more full and complete communion with God. As to the words which have been particularly

misconstrued, ὡς καὶ, they are not, in reality, of doubtful significance. Far from suggesting a *reason* for forgiveness, they view that blessing in the light of *similarity*. The sense is not "because," "on the ground of," or "for the reason that"; but rather it is "even as," "as also," "like as."¹ In the words of Bloomfield, they denote "similarity of kind, not comparison of degree."²

Hence, addressing the Heavenly Father, the disciples say, in effect: "In the matter of our daily sins, do Thou as we are in the habit of doing with those who offend against us—GRANT US FORGIVENESS." And we shall see that in this petition they were instructed in reference to a practice that was well understood in Jewish life at the time.

"The Lord's Release."

It is important to bear in mind that the spirit of forgiveness was provided for under the Old Covenant. We read, "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Prov. xxv. 21; cf. xxiv. 17). Here we have a doctrine of forgiveness, broad-based on the Divine example of long-suffering and pardon (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7; Num. xiv. 18-20). Though there might be laxity on the point in daily experience, yet the ideal was written plain in the sacred literature of Israel. "The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression" (Prov. xix. 11).

¹ See illustrative occurrences: Matt. xviii. 33, xx. 14; Acts xi. 17, xxii. 5, xxv. 10; Rom. ix. 25; 1 Cor. vii. 7, ix. 5, xvi. 10; Eph. ii. 3, v. 23; 2 Tim. iii. 9; Heb. xiii. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 1, iii. 16; Rev. xviii. 6.

² Bloomfield's GREEK TESTAMENT, Additional Annotations (1851), p. 13. Similarly Alford, GREEK TESTAMENT, Comment on Matt. vi.

There is, however, more to say on this matter. Not only had the children of Israel been taught to exercise a forgiving spirit; but through the operation of an institution that was peculiar to their religious and social order, the people had become accustomed to forgive off-hand, and as a matter of course, those that were indebted to them. The fact and its justification is found in “the Lord’s Release,” which came at the end of every seven years, as described in Deut. xv.: “Every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbour; he shall not exact it of his neighbour and his brother: because the Lord’s release hath been proclaimed” (*v.* 2; cf. chap. xxxi. 10). This ordinance of the Sabbatical year occupied an important place in a system whereby abject poverty was prevented, and a spirit of brotherhood fostered in the Israelite community.

Thus from time to time, as of duty and not of merit, the pious Jew forgave those that were indebted to him: on the one hand, he set free his servant after six years of work (Ex. xxi. 2; cf. Jer. xxxiv. 13 ff.); and, on the other hand, he “wrote off” the obligations of those who owed him anything. And even though the year of release might be “at hand,” the man who had means was compelled to help his poor brother with a loan, though it was morally certain that he would not receive anything in return. By obeying the law in this respect, he was “lending unto the Lord,” and on account thereof he would receive blessing from heaven (*vv.* 9, 10; cf. Prov. xix. 17). Hence when a Jew spoke of forgiving the trespasses of others, as the early disciples were led to do in the words of the Lord’s Prayer, he was simply alluding to a beneficent practice, ordained by statute in the Theocratic Govern-

ment: there was, assuredly, no thought of merit, no complacent boasting of deeds of mercy or virtue.¹

In this light we see the practical force of the clause. While the sense is not "*because* we forgive," so neither was it "*in the measure* that we forgive." Rather, it was "EVEN AS we forgive," *i.e.* IN LIKE MANNER. And how was that? By "cleaning the slate," by wiping off, once and for all, and never to be recalled, the tale of indebtedness, whether of service in the case of slaves, or of money in the case of debtors. "Forgive us, even as we have forgiven"—*i.e.* to remember no more, to pass by in such a manner that the account can never again be presented for payment! Said the Jew, in effect, as he used these words of Christ: "We forgive our debtors under a law from which we cannot escape; and the forgiveness brings peace and liberty to those that are forgiven. Even so, our Heavenly Father, forgive Thou us—straightaway and for ever, to the end that we may walk before Thee in peace and liberty, as children of the Most High, released from spiritual bondage by a forgiveness which ensures that we shall never be called into judgment."

We leave this subject for more detailed treatment in an Appendix:² merely remarking that the institution in question exercised a great moral influence in Israel. Among other things, it was a token of Grace under the dispensation of the Law; and assuredly it magnified the pardoning mercy of God. Doubtless there was transgression in this regard: some Israelites had "base thoughts in their hearts" and were unforgiving (Deut.

¹ It is noteworthy that, in Matt. vi. 12, the R.V. adopts a reading which it renders "as we also HAVE FORGIVEN"—an appeal to a past experience; while in Luke xi. 3 it reads "for we also FORGIVE"—an appeal to a national or habitual practice. But see p. 260, *infra*.

² See Appendix IV. p. 256 ff., *infra*.

xv. 9). In these circumstances, there arose a habit of speaking of Divine pardon in measured terms: *e.g.* “God forgives him who forgives his neighbours,” and “So long as we are merciful, God is merciful; but if we are not merciful to others, God is not merciful to us.”¹ These detached sayings of the Rabbis are hardly open to criticism, however, for our Lord uttered words to a like effect when He said: “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” All the while, however, we must remember that the Divine measure is “HOW MUCH MORE.” If we, men of earth, forgive, as we do, how much more may we not reckon on, be assured of, the forgiveness of our Heavenly Father?

The Prayer of the Child of God.

As we have seen, this petition is for the child of God: it only befits such as can say “Our Father.” The words are not for one who is AGAINST THE SON, but rather for one who is ON HIS PART. They are for those who have experienced acceptance with God, and now seek a continued evidence of the Divine favour. And the fact that God is “faithful and just to forgive” His people, is sufficient proof that His people stand in need of forgiveness (see 1 John i. 9). In the words of Dean Vaughan:

The one sweeping forgiveness may lie far in the past—yet is there day by day a forgiveness needed, and a forgiveness vouchsafed. “He that hath bathed himself” all over, once for all, in the ocean of Atonement, “needeth not” afterward “save to wash his feet”—yet that partial washing he needs, and here it is provided for.²

¹ *Rosh ha-shanah*, 17a; *Megillah*, 28a.

² THE LORD’S PRAYER (1875), pp. 141, 142.

A clear judgment on this point will not only save us from misunderstanding the petition, but also from entertaining low and unworthy views of the Prayer as a whole. Another well-known expositor says :

Here we have the entreaty of one already saved, that the daily transgressions of his still imperfect condition, and the many shortcomings of his service to the Lord Jesus, may be graciously pardoned. And the Prayer should check anything like presumption or spiritual pride, reminding us, as it does, how continually we need the cleansing blood to wash away the stains of our repeated trespasses.¹

In terms which seem to belong to a past time, but are nevertheless of the essence of New Testament teaching, we may describe the petition, and, indeed, the Prayer as a whole, as for such as are "justified in Christ Jesus." Accordingly, the "forgiveness" of which we now read, and the "deliverance from evil," which will be considered in a later chapter, both contribute to the SANCTIFICATION of the believer; and it is, of course, fitting that those who are being so "prepared unto glory" should forgive them that trespass against them, and confess the same in the words ordained by Christ.

It is related of a Christian pastor of large experience that he found a member of his flock labouring under great distress of mind, and unable to obtain that peace which she sought by prayer. This clause of the Lord's Prayer supplied a conclusive test; the lady was, in

¹ G. H. Pember, *THE GREAT PROPHECIES OF THE CENTURIES CONCERNING THE CHURCH*, pp. 171, 172. William Kelly's explanation is to the same effect: "The forgiveness of a child is all that is spoken of here, the removal of what hinders communion. . . . It is therefore the habitual need of the soul, just as the daily bread was that of the body." *EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE*, pp. 183, 184.

fact, unwilling to complete the petition—“as we forgive,” etc. Until these words express our personal experience, we cannot offer the Prayer with assured acceptance.

The Practical Issue.

A sound interpretation must not ignore the immediate circumstances of the men into whose mouth the petition was first put. Beyond question they were men who were called upon to suffer obloquy and shame for the name of their Master. They knew what it was to go “as lambs into the midst of wolves”; and to encounter peculiar trials as the followers of a Rabbi who was despised by the leaders of the people. Their friends and brethren disowned them, and those of their own household assumed the attitude of foes (Matt. x. 34–36). It was in aggravated circumstances such as these that the disciples learned to “forgive their debtors,” and in the light of truly terrible experiences that they came to realise the depth of God’s forbearance and pardoning mercy (cf. Matt. v. 44, 45; Luke vi. 31–35).

It was to these men that the Lord spoke when He said: “Whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. If ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” And again, it was in the hearing of these men that He said: “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; release, and ye shall be released” (Mark xi. 25, 26; Luke vi. 37). These counsels lie at the base of the spirit of forgiveness; and they intimate very plainly the condition of the

enjoyment of Divine favour, even as they indicate the frame of mind which will incur the Divine displeasure.

The man who refuses forgiveness to his fellow cannot expect forgiveness from God. In the first place, there is in his heart a disposition of enmity which effectually stands in the way of his prayer being accepted. In the second place, it would appear that, in his own mind, he has denounced judgment upon his fellow, whom, in such a manner as it is in his power, he retains under the bondage of unforgiven guilt. Such a man is not in a position to receive any blessing from God; and for him to ask daily for pardon is simply an act of ignorance or impiety. Let him "first be reconciled to his brother": "the merciful . . . shall obtain mercy" (Matt. v. 7, 24).

Accordingly, if we would offer this petition aright, and continue to enjoy the forgiveness of which it speaks, we must, for ourselves, seek a forgiving spirit, and maintain the same with vigilance. It was in answer to a question put by Peter, as to how often an offending brother should be pardoned, that our Lord spoke the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, concluding with the counsel that we are to "forgive every one his brother from our hearts" (Matt. xviii. 21-25; Luke xvii. 3, 4). We are to forgive, not to judge. If, by the exercise of an unforgiving spirit, we judge our fellows, in like manner we shall ourselves be judged.

The Believer's "Quit-Rent."

Is it not of deep significance that this clause of the Prayer is the only one which our Lord proceeds to expand and enforce? And the added words are very explicit: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. If ye forgive

not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matt. vi. 14, 15). As the law of “the Lord’s Release,” in Deut. xv., did not ignore the hard-hearted man with “a thought of Belial” (or base thought) in his heart (*v.* 9), so neither did our Lord overlook the possibility of some follower of His thinking that he could ask for a release which, on his own part, he was unwilling to grant. It thus appears that at the point of personal duty the test is decisive—a duty which, it has been said with truth, is at once “the hardest to the natural man, and the most characteristic of the mind of Christ Jesus.”¹

In the words of Martin Luther, this clause is a *TOKEN* designed to remind us of the ground or condition of continued blessing; and, moreover, when spoken from the heart it may be regarded as a *SEAL* affixed by God to the absolution which is desired.² Further, in the quaint words of Anthony Farindon, it is the believer’s “QUIT-RENT”—as he says: “Your quit-rent, your acknowledgment of God’s great mercy, is your mercy to others. Pay it down; or you have made a forfeiture of all.”³

“In many things we offend all.” As children of God, however, we may daily pray, “Forgive us our debts”; and when we stand praying, we must not neglect to forgive—not refuse to do as we desire to be done by. In order to a right mind on the entire matter, we do well to give heed to the words of the Apostle when he said, “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also

¹ Bishop Alfred Barry in *THE TEACHER’S PRAYER-BOOK*, p. 42.

² Luther’s *PRIMARY WORKS*: The Lord’s Prayer, fifth petition.

³ Anthony Farindon, sermon on “The Love of Mercy,” No. IX. in vol. i. of *COMPLETE WORKS* (ed. Jackson, 1849).

in Christ forgave you" (Eph. iv. 32). And this, assuredly, is not legal ground, but the ground of grace; and therein we see how the justified sinner may bring forth fruit unto holiness, and in the process of sanctification realise the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Hence in all circumstances we may say:

OUR FATHER . . . FORGIVE US OUR
DEBTS, AS WE ALSO FORGIVE OUR
DEBTORS.

CHAPTER XIII

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION . . . ”

The Jewish Standpoint—Aspects of Temptation—“. . . Deliver us from Evil”—Practical Bearing of the Petition.

HAVING asked for food and forgiveness, in satisfaction of physical and spiritual needs, the disciple has one more daily request, and that a twofold one. He seeks fatherly protection and care, in satisfaction of moral needs—“Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” It should be noted at the outset, that the petition has more than a detached place in the Prayer. By the figure of speech known as *polysyndeton*, the second and third petitions of this section of the Prayer are appended to the first and connected with each other—“And” . . . “And.”

As we have found, those to whom our Lord was giving instruction in regard to prayer were from first to last shown how to approach the Throne of Grace in simple terms. Hence there is nothing abstruse or far-fetched in the language employed. The bread question was fundamental, and could not be excluded from the social life, whether in the lodging of the poor or the mansion of the rich. Moreover, moral failure and

spiritual delinquency were conceptions that continually occupied the mind of the thoughtful Jew, the same being fostered by every prophet that spoke from God. Now, in the words of Dr. Saphir :

No sooner have we asked and received forgiveness, than we look forward with fear and anxiety to the power and subtlety of temptation ; having washed our garments, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, we are anxious to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.¹

Though, as we know, hostile to the Teacher sent from God, the Jewish people cherished the instruction given by holy men of old time ; and hence they were never far from thoughts of moral need and deficiency, obligation and duty, submission and dependence. In these circumstances, the concluding petition of the Prayer made its appeal to common experience and conviction, as these were met with in the highway of everyday life.

"Bring us not into temptation." The clause is the same in Matthew and Luke. It is assumed, without argument, that, as a fact, the Heavenly Father inclines, leads, brings, His people into certain states and surroundings. The petition seeks no change in this respect ; indeed, it is an indirect recognition of (and acquiescence in) the fact of the Divine leading and guidance. What it suggests, or rather seeks, is that such provision shall be in a direction that yields no temptation to sin, that permits no hostile attack upon that moral and spiritual course of life which is well-pleasing to God.

When conducting his child, the father is careful to avoid danger, for the sake of the one who trusts his hand. As with the earthly, so also with the heavenly, and

¹ LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lect. XIV.

especially with regard to the danger of temptation to sin. How appropriate then is the petition—“Bring us not into temptation”! Here is an expression of filial confidence which says, in effect: “May my path this day be one which shall not involve me in moral or spiritual danger. Enough for me to be the Father’s dutiful child. I have no wish to come under the influence of those who know not God, or to do things that are contrary to His holy will.”

The Jewish Standpoint.

Needless to say, the pious in Israel had recollection of “the day of temptation in the wilderness” (Ex. xvii. 1-7; cf. Deut. vi. 16, ix. 22; Ps. lxxviii. 18, 40, 56, xcv. 8; Heb. iii. 9). As a result of such a lesson of failure, it was natural that they should pray for freedom from trial, and thus seek relief, at once from the murmuring that comes from misfortune, and from the failure that comes from distrust of the Almighty. Hence, in agreement with the other petitions in this section of the Prayer, the one now under consideration is wide-embracing; and its distinctive word, *πειρασμός*, is one which meets us in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament in places that describe instances of terrible unbelief and provocation of God, including that recorded in Ex. xvii., and referred to in the other passages just quoted.

The modern Jew, in the service of the Synagogue, prays in a form which has come from a distant past:

And may it be Thy will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, to make us familiar with Thy Law, and to make us cleave to Thy commandments. O LEAD US NOT INTO THE POWER OF SIN, or of transgression, or iniquity, OR OF TEMPTATION, or of scorn: let not the evil inclination have sway over

us: keep us far from a bad man and a bad companion: make us cleave to the good inclination and to good works: subdue our inclination so that it may submit itself unto Thee, etc.¹

Temptation may be considered from two points of view. In one of these, we see God trying His people, proving them; in the other, we see the people tempting God, provoking Him to anger. When God brought trial to Israel, it was with designs for the good of the nation; when such trials were met with murmuring, it became clear that the intended good was not appreciated. Hence temptation may be affirmed of God and of His people—*e.g.* (1) "God did tempt Abraham" (Gen. xxii. 1); (2) the children of Israel "tempted the Lord" (Ex. xvii. 7). The verb is *nāsāh*; and it yields a substantive *māssāh*, rendered "temptation" and "trial," and furnishing a significant place-name (see passage last quoted). Another derivation is *nissāyōn*, which occurs in the Synagogue prayer just given (rendered "temptation"), and has the preference of Delitzsch and Margoliouth in their versions of the Prayer into Hebrew. Thus we are able to see the all-round application of the petition: not only do we seek relief from trial, but we are anxious that we shall not be subjected to such proving as may eventuate in murmuring and sin—our tempting the Lord.²

In the "Fountain" Prayer given by Christ we have all that is implied in the Synagogue prayer. "Bring us not into temptation." The thought was in the mind of our Lord when, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said: "WATCH AND PRAY, THAT YE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION." The gracious injunction was made

¹ Singer's DAILY PRAYER BOOK, Morning Service (p. 7).

² See version of the Prayer in Hebrew, p. 212 f., *infra*.

emphatic by the words of Divine compassion which immediately followed: “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. xxvi. 41; Mark xiv. 38; Luke xxii. 40, 46). And is it not in harmony with the petition, and the warning likewise, that we read elsewhere: “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation” (2 Pet. ii. 9)? Where He deems it wise not to deliver, even there He is gracious not to desert—as we learn from many a Scripture record, including the cases of the Hebrew children in Babylon, also of Daniel, and of Stephen, the proto-martyr (Dan. chaps. iii. and vi.; Acts vi.).

The practical importance of the petition now under notice is made evident from the sad lapses of many of the people of God; and its relation to the leadings of Providence, as these are often misapprehended by followers of Christ, was set forth in searching words by an expositor of a past generation:

Many a fair character, both in the world and in the Church, if led into temptation, would be soon stripped of his glory. What then do we mean by courting applauses, by forming carnal connexions, by plunging into unnecessary cares, or by coveting lucrative situations? Much of what men call the *leadings of providence* is, in fact, God’s leading them into temptation, for the detecting of their true character.

Lot might no doubt have pleaded that providence led him to discover a *rich and well-watered plain*, and he only followed its openings. Gehazi had a fine opportunity afforded him; and he only embraced it. Moses, however, had a much greater opening than either of them; but he declined it. The truth is, providence is no rule of duty, independent of Scripture. If the Scriptures warrant a measure and providence open the way, we may safely walk into it; but woe to him that catcheth every opportunity that offers to aggrandise himself!

Many a man would have killed Saul in the cave of Adullam, and have pleaded, as David's servants did, that "the Lord had delivered his enemy into his hand"; but so did not David, because of the fear of God. I only add, there is no necessary connexion between going into temptation and coming out of it. Both Judas and Peter went in, but only one of them returned; and those who go in on a presumption of coming out again by repentance, will probably be fatally mistaken.¹

Aspects of Temptation.

Are we to understand that, as a fact, God brings His people into temptation? Yes, assuredly; but we must take care not to misunderstand the process. There is temptation and temptation; and the word *πειρασμός*, as found in the text, equally with the verb *πειράζω*, from which it is derived, may signify the one and the other. In the one case, temptation affords to its subject an occasion to show constancy or fidelity, and may be a veritable means of grace. In this sense (we read) "God did tempt Abraham," that is, He tested him (Gen. xxi. 1), even as, later on, He proved the children of Israel, "to do them good" (Deut. viii. 16). On the other hand, temptation is a solicitation to sin, prompted by an intent to corrupt, or defile. In this sense (we read) the devil "tempted" our Lord (Matt. iv. 1 ff.). Here we have procedure which answers to the customary bad sense of the words "tempt" and "temptation."

When the Apostle James writes that "God tempteth no man," he is concerned with the second sense of the word—the bad sense. He was not thinking of a testing, like that of Abraham, that might prove to be a

¹ Andrew Fuller, EXPOSITION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Complete Works, 1841).

means of blessing, but rather of a trial of virtue with the design of compassing a moral lapse. Hence he writes: “God cannot be tempted with evil things; and He Himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.” Here, to adopt the words of Alford, we are in the presence, “not of the providential bringing about of, but the actual solicitation to, the temptation.”¹ On the other hand, the temptation, trial, proving, that may rightly be attributed to God, is that which may result in the MAKING of a man, as we know to have been the case with Abraham of old.

Yet, like chastening, which “seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous,” so trial, from whatever quarter arising, is something which even true disciples of Christ may reasonably fear. In the words of Bruce:

All trial is of doubtful issue, and may therefore, naturally and innocently, be shrunk from, even by those who know that the result may be good, confirmation in faith and virtue.²

As, however, chastening “yieldeth the fruit of righteousness,” so, in like manner, trial may eventuate in moral growth and spiritual strength. Accordingly, the Apostle writes: “Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations: knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience. . . . Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life” (Jas. i. 2, 12).

There is, of course, no need to infer from these considerations that all the temptations that beset

¹ Dean Alford, GREEK TESTAMENT, Comment on Matt. vi. 13.

² A. B. Bruce, EXPOSITOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT, vol. i. p. 122.

followers of Christ are of Divine ordering. Some may be; some may not be. It is more to the purpose, however, to realise that safety and comfort lie, not in investigating the source of every trial, or endeavouring to estimate the possible risk incurred; but rather in committing our way to God, and seeking His protection in all circumstances. And what does this mean but to recognise the LEADING which the faithful have enjoyed all down the ages?¹ Hence the petition is not in the hackneyed form, "Leave us not while in temptation," but "LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."² There must be leading if indeed we are His; we desire it, and pray for it: we would not be without it. The thought is: "Lead us," BRING US—yes, BUT! "Bring us not into temptation"—lead us in safety, away from temptation, as the conjoint clause of the petition says: "BUT deliver us from evil." The conducting grace and power of God we must have, but we say "not into temptation," and then we add, "away from evil." As Alford has expressed it: "Bring us not into conflict with evil, nay, rather deliver (rid) us from evil."³

¹ *e.g.* Ps. xxiii. 3, xxvii. 11, xxxiii. 3, cxxxix. 10, 24.

² We can appreciate the sensitiveness that suggested the modification which appears in certain forms of liturgy in the sixteenth century: "And suffer us not to be led into temptation," and "let us not be led," etc. The desire was to safeguard the Divine honour; but that honour is by no means imperilled, or exposed to reproof, when we understand the petition as a whole as implying a LEADING as well as a DELIVERING: in the former case, "not into temptation"; in the latter case, "from evil." See "Litany with Suffrages," 1544; "Primer" of 1545; also WORKS OF CRANMER, Parker Soc. ed., vol. ii. p. 106.

³ In the Book of Psalms one frequently meets with positive statements and wishes expressed in negative form: *e.g.* Ps. xxxv. 20, "They speak not peace," *i.e.* they talk of war; xli. 2, "Deliver Thou not unto," *i.e.* preserve Thou from; cxli. 4, "Incline not my heart," *i.e.* lead me away from.

Looked at all round, the first clause of the petition is of urgent importance to all disciples of Christ. Thereby we ask for “safety and defence in all dangers”—that they may not become “temptations” to us.¹ Yet, assuredly, it is not the will of God that all His people, at all times, shall be free from temptation. In some cases He gives grace and strength whereby, in the midst of many trials, His servants show themselves “faithful unto death.” Our Lord Himself, though He “trusted on God” (as the scoffers said), was not delivered from the cross with its shame and pain (Matt. xxvii. 43). Therefore, in all circumstances and every experience, we must cultivate the mind of Christ, and accustom ourselves to say with Him: “Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (Matt. xxvi. 39).

“ . . . Deliver us from Evil.”

These words were evidently passed over by our Lord when giving the Prayer on the second occasion, as recorded in Luke’s Gospel (see R.V. *marg.*). The omission suggests that the thought is involved in the first clause of the petition; and therefore supplies a justification for the conclusion that the words do not constitute an additional petition. The man who is shielded from temptation is, to that extent, delivered from evil. If, as we have held, the second promulgation of the Prayer was designed to be suggestive rather than explicit, then the part as recorded in Luke would readily recall the whole as recorded in Matthew, to such as had received the Prayer when given in the Sermon on the Mount. As there are times when a teacher contents himself with the points of a lesson, so also there are times when scholars expect no more.

¹ Bishop Alfred Barry, in *TEACHER’S PRAYER-BOOK*, p. 158.

As given to the disciples, in the circumstances explained in Matt. vi., the words before us demand interpretation in the light of their setting. As for the "but" that begins the clause, it is not adversative and intended to cancel the previous clause, but rather it is emphatic, and brings in the thought of confirmation and expansion. If the clause had begun with "and," we might with some reason have concluded that it constituted a distinct petition; not so, however, with the "but." Hence the petition as a whole is—"Bring me not . . . but deliver us . . ." There is the negative and the positive—a "bringing into" is feared, and a "delivering from" is desired; and the two requests agree in one.

Looked at grammatically, the words *ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ* may mean either "from evil" in the abstract, or "from the evil one," as equivalent to "from the devil." The question involved is one which can hardly be regarded as decided by the preponderance of theological opinion in any one particular age. Had the purpose been to say *ἀπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου*, we might have expected to find that form in the petition. On the contrary, we find something less concrete and more inclusive; and we feel justified in gathering that our Lord intended more than a reference to the devil. Apart from the demands of our systems, we should at once find in the petition as a whole great abstract ideas—"temptation" and "evil." When we proceed to read "tempter" and "devil," we narrow the thought and limit the horizon. Beyond question "tempter" and "devil" are there, but so likewise are wider conceptions, bringing in a host of agents of lust and iniquity, natural and spiritual, small and great.

Consider the circumstances of the disciples who first

employed the words. In going from place to place at the command of their Master, they would encounter “unreasonable and wicked men,” even “wolves in sheep’s clothing.” From all such, they might well desire to be delivered. And had they not still more subtle enemies to fear—evils within as well as without, wrong-thinking no less than wrong-doing? As a fact, these men desired protection from “every evil work” (2 Tim. iv. 18). This idea of evil, comprehensive and hateful, is the רָע and הָרָע (rā’ and hā-rā’) of the Old Testament; and turned into Hebrew the words ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ would be מֵרָע (mē-rā’) or מִן הָרָע (min hā-rā’), which, while it may suggest Satan, likewise includes “the devil and all his works.” Accordingly, we regard “the evil one” as an undesirable rendering, because limiting the sense of the petition. As we know, the Jews had well-defined ideas of evil, for Rabbi Judah was wont to pray:

Let it be Thy good pleasure to DELIVER US FROM IMPUDENT MEN, AND IMPUDENCE ITSELF; from AN EVIL MAN AND FROM AN EVIL CHANCE; from an evil affection, from an evil companion, from an evil neighbour; FROM SATAN THE DESTROYER, from a hard judgment, and from a hard adversary, etc.¹

This is after the manner of the Rabbis; there is verbose inclusiveness. Our Lord, on the contrary, presented prayer in the light of simplicity and sincerity; and where the Jewish doctors multiplied words He gave us a clause or two which comprehended all that they laboured to express. Temptation implies a tempter, and evil implies the devil; but in many cases

¹ *Berakoth*, fol. 16b, Lightfoot’s WORKS, Pitman’s edition, vol. xi. pp. 145, 146. See also Singer’s DAILY PRAYER BOOK, p. 7.

we see effects apart from causes, and more generally we are impressed with the evil things around us rather than with their mysterious springs or counterparts in the spiritual world. And assuredly, in acts of prayer, in presence of "Our Father which art in heaven," we are not so much in fear of Satan, as of the manifestations of evil which so easily appeal to our weak and erring nature. Hence, to find in the petition a direct reference to the devil is to ruffle the atmosphere of prayer at a time when the disciple does well to be conscious of no other presence than that of Him who is able to save unto the uttermost. In the words of another :

When on our knees before our God, we see no second throne, and no divided sovereignty.¹

The clause expresses in plural terms an ever-recurring cry of the Psalmist; and as he prayed and was heard, so also we in this late day may reckon on deliverance from "all our enemies."

Practical Bearing of the Petition.

The bearing of the petition upon the Christian life is obvious. The Apostle Paul recognised this when he wrote to the saints at Corinth: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. x. 13). This is a practical comment on

¹ Richard Glover, LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, p. 104. It is significant that Henri Lasserre (unjustifiably introducing the singular number of the pronoun) paraphrased the clause: "Deliver me from the evil which is in me and around me, from the evil which I do, and from the evil which others do to me" (LES SAINTES EVANGILES, note on Matt. vi. 13).

the terms of the petition ; and should encourage Christian people, in spite of perplexing appearances, to pray the “bring not” and the “but deliver”—the positive as well as the negative—with the assurance that, however great the temptation, and however threatening the evil, God will give sanctifying guidance and grant complete emancipation to those who trust Him.

While, however, we are “not ignorant of the devices” of the devil, we do well to watch with care the motions of unbelief and disobedience in our own wayward hearts ; for these could not have been out of view when the Prayer was given. Accordingly, the practical force of the words has been thus explained :

The evil we chiefly aim at being delivered from, is that which comes of temptation yielded to. Not that the words do not include every kind of evil, all that man redeemed will at last be free from, but the evil primarily in view here is sin, or what produces sin. By the words of Christ Himself we must interpret this Prayer ; and His own petition for His people is : “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

Without being at once put beyond the reach of the ordinary privations of this life, we may, then, be delivered from the evil. We can be kept from the evil without being set above disappointments, sicknesses, distress, loss. We can be delivered from evil without being delivered from this world. This evil, therefore, cannot be in the world so much as in ourselves, cannot be in our condition so much as in our character.¹

Thus the Prayer as a whole, as well as the petition now under notice, is a promise of great things from God. We ask, that we may receive ; we seek, that we may find. To utter the petition, however, implies an

¹ Marcus Dods, *THE PRAYER THAT TEACHES TO PRAY*, chap. 7.

attitude which, in turn, involves a grave responsibility. This was seen by William Tindale, who wrote :

Seeing the God of all mercy, who knows thine infirmity, commands thee to pray in all temptation and adversity, and has promised to help, if thou trust in Him, what excuse is it to say, when thou hast sinned : " I could not stand of myself," when His power was ready to help thee, if thou hadst asked ?¹

Thus, we see, the gracious provision of our Heavenly Father leaves us " without excuse." When combining the two clauses, we realise the true force of the petition, as the Church has expressed it for many generations in the words of the *Te Deum* : " Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin." The desire is one, and it is important to regard the words in that practical light. The case for the unity of the petition has been put with force by Dr. Geden :

To separate the two clauses the one from the other, is to pervert their meaning, and destroy their force. They are most closely bound together in thought and intention. Either is shorn of its strength if it stand alone. The Master could never have bidden us ask simply that we might not be brought into trial, seeing the trial is for our good. He does bid us remember our own weakness, our inability to cope unaided with difficulty and trouble ; and therefore deprecate the evil which might come to us through the trial. Bring us not into circumstances of trial, because we are so feeble, and so liable to go astray ; yet not our will but Thine be done ; and if Thou seest fit to bring us into trial, then deliver us from the evil therein.²

The Master Himself had a deep personal experience of trial. He was " in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Just before giving the Prayer

¹ EXPOSITION OF SERMON ON THE MOUNT, notes on the Prayer.

² In *The Thinker*, vol. i, p. 211.

to His followers, He was "tempted of the devil." Bishop Chase has maintained, with convincing force, that "every clause of the Prayer stands forth with greater sharpness and clearness of meaning when seen in the light of the Lord's Temptation."¹ If this is true of the clauses in general, what shall be said of this last, which deals with the assaults of evil? Was not temptation an epitome of the whole life of our Lord—was He not in conflict with evil all the time? Assuredly so, and the instruction to pray in these words was dictated by a terrible experience on the part of One who Himself prayed that His followers might be "KEPT FROM THE EVIL" (John xvii. 15).

It remains to note that, in the matter of trial "the disciple is as his Master, and the servant as his Lord"—he likewise lives in a sphere of conflict, and passes his time in the midst of enemies. If he were free from temptation, he would be "above his Lord," which is inconceivable. As at the beginning, so now, disciples of Christ bear witness in regard to One who is "rejected of men"; and they are in continual need of guidance and deliverance such as the petition specifies.

Hence the Prayer closes with the soul-supporting thought that the child is in the Father's hand. We do not finish by asking for *bread* (bodily need); for *forgiveness* (of sin); but rather for *protection* (from danger). And we ask this from Him in whose hands are "all our times"—

Times of sickness, times of health;
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief;
Times of triumph and relief;

¹ "The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church," in CAMBRIDGE TEXTS AND STUDIES, vol. i. (1891) p. 104 ff.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Times the tempter's power to prove ;
Times to taste a Saviour's love :
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my Heavenly Friend.¹

Thus when in need of "succour, help, and comfort," when in "danger, necessity, or tribulation"—and this indeed is the daily condition of every child of God—we say :

OUR FATHER . . . LEAD US NOT INTO
TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM
EVIL.

¹ From Dr. John Ryland's hymn, "Sovereign Ruler of the Skies."

CHAPTER XIV

THE DOXOLOGY

Its Significance—"All Praise to God."

IN some manuscripts and ancient versions of Matthew's Gospel, the Lord's Prayer is followed by a doxology to the following effect:

"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

In Luke's Gospel there is no trace of any such addition. As found in the First Gospel, the words are an obvious interruption of the context; and as all modern editors of the text have excluded the clause, our remarks on the subject need not be many.

Following the textual authorities, the English and American Revisers omit the words from the Sermon on the Mount, and insert a marginal note in these terms: "Many authorities, some ancient, but with variations, add *For Thine is . . . Amen* (as A.V.)."¹ Clearly the doxology found its way into the text from

¹ The work of scholars, as shown in many editions of the New Testament in English, had prepared the public for the exclusion of the doxology. With few exceptions, moreover, modern versions in continental tongues either exclude the words, or qualify their place in the text.

ancient liturgies, in which such features were quite common.

When we consider the extensive use of the Lord's Prayer in the sub-apostolic age and succeeding centuries,¹ we have no difficulty in accounting for the insertion of the doxology. In the first place, the words became associated with the Prayer through liturgical use; then, as a consequence of that association, they were given a place in the text, possibly by copyists who concluded that they were part of the Prayer to which they had become attached in the exercises of worship. The many verbal variations in the formula as given in manuscripts and versions, effectively discredit any claims of the doxology to a place in the Prayer-ordinance as given by our Lord. In some instances, "power" alone is ascribed; in others the formula proceeds to eulogise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the *Didachē*, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, the doxology reads: "For Thine is the power, and the glory for ever."² The Greek Fathers, even when expounding the Prayer in detail, omit the doxology. It is noteworthy, moreover, that in some cases where the formula is missing, the concluding "Amen" is added by copyist or translator.

¹ Also, as we shall show later on, in the Apostolic age itself, a fact of which testimony is borne, indirectly, in Rom. viii. 15 and Gal. iv. 6.

² Here we have one of several indications that the *Didachē* did not originate in the first century, as many scholars have supposed. The nameless author wrote at a time when the doxology had become attached to the Lord's Prayer, as in the third or fourth centuries. Living thus in days of declension, he wrote with a reforming purpose, though not in a controversial spirit; and he set forth "the Teaching of the Twelve" as distinguished in simplicity and purity from the less reliable teaching which prevailed around him. He said, in effect, "Back to the Apostles!"—a cry which would have had no meaning if he had written in the Apostolic age itself.

Such is the strength of habit and convention! It was the custom for prayers to conclude with "Amen," and therefore the word must be set as a seal upon the Prayer given by the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Jewish practice of response or doxology, on the part of the people assembled in public worship, was sure to pass over into the Christian Church. In the Old Testament we read of occasions on which "all the people said, Amen" (Deut. xxvii. 15 ff.; 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Neh. v. 13, viii. 6; Ps. cvi. 48; cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 16); and the five divisions of the Book of Psalms are made to end with doxologies more or less elaborate (Ps. xli., lxxii., lxxxix., cvi., cl.)—substantially one eulogy being presented in five distinct forms. Later on, it became the custom in Israel for the people to exclaim at stated intervals of Divine worship: "Blessed be His Name, the glory of whose kingdom is for ever and ever" (*Yoma*, fol. 39. 1; 41. 2; but chiefly 66. 1).

The New Testament exhibits many doxological formulæ,¹ some of which seem clearly to anticipate the passage with which the Lord's Prayer was made to conclude, as we must suppose, in the third century of our era. Not being found in the oldest texts, however, the words, though familiar, and to many minds precious, and full of holy suggestion, cannot be regarded as having behind them the authority of the Master, or of the Evangelist who recorded His utterances. Yet, that the doxology embodies Apostolic conceptions of praise, and is essentially Hebraic in form, is beyond question. In brief, showing a particular relation to 1 Chron. xxix. 11; 1 Tim. i. 17; and Rev. v. 13, the

¹ Rom. xi. 36, xvi. 27; Gal. i. 3; Eph. iii. 21; Phil. iv. 20; 1 Tim. i. 17, vi. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 21; 1 Pet. iv. 11, v. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 18; Jude 25; Rev. i. 6, v. 13, vii. 12.

passage is a grand ascription of all rule, authority, and power, to "our Father in heaven," who is the Fountain of majesty and mercy.

Its Significance.

The ADDITION of the doxology in the manner described has a meaning of deep significance. So to speak, the added words GREW TO the Prayer, as a result of extensive and continuous custom. Here, in fact, we have eloquent proof of the fact that the Prayer which our Lord taught His disciples was greatly treasured by the early Christians, and that its petitions were regarded as acceptable beyond any words of man's ordering. The Prayer was not only a memorial of Him who gave it, but also a means of communion with the Father in heaven; and, having uttered its sacred petitions, whether individually or collectively, believers could conclude by praising Him who is "King of the Ages" (Rev. xv. 3). Though given as a means of instruction in supplication, the Prayer was, of course, never intended to restrain praise. So, after rehearsing its clauses, the worshippers "let themselves go" in the glorifying of the God to whom they had prayed. As for the words of the doxology, whatever their origin and history, they are fitting and beautiful. They ascribe the Kingdom, Power, and Glory to Him whose Name, Kingdom, and Will were the subject of petition in the first division of the Prayer.

Though we may not always be in a mood to utter the doxology—assuredly the words of the Prayer are for all moods—yet we cannot but be grateful for "acceptable words" wherewith to praise God. Hence we can sympathise with one who, not having been confronted by the question of the authenticity or

otherwise of the doxology, felt that, at its conclusion, the Lord's Prayer should excite in the filial soul some such thoughts as these :

And as we crave all this from Thee, we humbly tender our praises with our future service to Thee. Thou art the King of all the world, and more than the life of all the living. Thy Kingdom is everlasting : wise, and just, and merciful is Thy government. Blessed are they that are Thy faithful subjects ; but who hath hardened himself against Thee, and hath prospered ? The whole creation proclaimeth Thy perfection ; but it is heaven where the blessed see Thy glory, and the glory of our Redeemer ; where the angels and saints behold Thee, admire Thee, adore Thee, love Thee, and praise Thee with triumphant, joyful songs, the holy, holy, holy God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who was, and is, and is to come ; of Thee, and through Thee, and to Thee, are all things : to Thee be glory for ever. Amen.¹

“ALL PRAISE TO GOD.”

“*For Thine is the Kingdom.*”

O'er all God's creations in heaven above,

O'er all on the earth, or below ;

As wide as the universe, broad as His love

His kingdom extendeth, we know.

The kings of the earth shall acknowledge His Reign ;

Shall see that their strivings against Him are vain !

“*And the Power.*”

Unlimited power is His to command !

The winds and the waves must obey.

His law is a force which no foe can withstand ;

They fall, though in battle array !

Their armies are crushed when He moves in His might,

And powers of darkness are scattered in flight !

¹ Richard Baxter, THE POOR MAN'S FAMILY BOOK, Forms of Prayer, sec. 3.

"And the Glory."

The glory is Thine, O Thou God of all grace,
Thy wisdom and strength never fail.
Thy mercy and love we can everywhere trace;
The truths of Thy Word shall prevail.
For man, sinful man, is redeemed from the Fall;
All glory to Thee! Thou art God over all!

"For ever."

Unchangeable God! Thou art ever the same:
For ever Thy truth shall abide.
Though mountains remove, we can trust in Thy name;
Trust Thee, as our God and our guide.
For ever the same Thine unchangeable love;
With Thee, we shall dwell in bright mansions above!

"Amen."

Our Father! Amen. Do Thou help us to live,
To live in this world as we pray.
Forgive, Lord! forgive, as we also forgive;
Give strength for our conflicts each day.
Amen, and amen! Let us triumph o'er sin;
O'er temptations without, and temptations within!

JOHN M. MORSE.

CHAPTER XV

ASPECTS AND RELATIONS

(1) The Lord's Prayer—(2) The Daily Prayer—(3) The Disciples' Prayer—(4) The Missionary Prayer—(5) The Social Prayer—(6) The Filial Prayer—(7) The Father Prayer.

A GAIN and again we have had occasion to observe that, though, in Jewish usage, an epitome or "Fountain," the Lord's Prayer is, notwithstanding, marvellously comprehensive. The clauses, few and brief, are such as in no instance wait upon personal moods or feelings; in fact, for the true child of God, confidently treading the path of duty, every clause is suited for every day and all circumstances of life. Human compilations, whether bald or rhetorical, ever require to be adjusted to the passing experiences of life; but no such adjustment is necessary in order to a use of "the prayer which teaches to pray." We proceed to notice the outstanding aspects and relations of the Prayer, and find it to be—

(1) THE LORD'S PRAYER

It is this for a reason at once obvious and sufficient: it was given by our Lord Himself. One of His

disciples said: "LORD, teach us to pray." And He said, "When ye pray, SAY." The request of one evoked an ordinance for all. As John the Baptist, following a Rabbinical custom, had taught his disciples a prayer, so likewise did our Lord; and the Prayer which we have sought to understand is the one thus given—THE LORD'S PRAYER, the *Oratio Dominica* of Cyprian.

Of course, the Divine Teacher, on His part, never used the "Our Father": in essential respects He stood apart from those to whom He gave the great lesson in devotion. Here, as in other senses, the Master was above the servant, the Lord above the disciple. A great gulf separated the Son of God—the Only-begotten Son of the Father—from the many sons whom He was bringing into the family of Heaven. Though He spoke to the Father, it was not in the words of the OUR FATHER. That prayer was for THEM—"When YE pray." In the words of another:

It was *their* prayer, *not* His. And why not His? Because it had in the heart of it a petition which He could never utter: "Forgive us our sins, for we forgive every one that is indebted to us." Yet that petition was indispensable for them. Every prayer of theirs had to contain an element of confession before it could be acceptable to the Father. Even when it consisted chiefly of adoration or supplication, it must be permeated with the feeling of unworthiness. They could only draw near to God aright as penitents, acknowledging mercies which they had not deserved, imploring a grace which they had too often despised. This undertone of short-coming was to be the note of their devotion; and it had no place in His.¹

Both in prayer and praise, the forms of utterance used by our Lord were distinctive. We find Him

¹ D. W. Forrest, in *The Thinker*, vol. iv. p. 332.

saying: "Father," "Holy Father," and "Righteous Father"; when speaking to His followers He said: "Your Father," and "My Father"; and on one occasion, associating Himself more closely with those who attended Him in His journeyings, He beautifully said: "My Father and your Father." But He never used the "Our" in His prayers. In communion with God, as in all besides, the Master occupied ground entirely His own.

From the very beginning, the Prayer has been spoken of as the Lord's Prayer, and for the conclusive reason that it is OF THE LORD, and not of man; OF THE MASTER, and not of the servant. All students of the New Testament know that we have a personal prayer of our Lord—words which the Son of Man spoke on a special occasion (John xvii.). There is no reason, however, to confuse with that private utterance the ordinance which the same Lord, the same Son of Man, expressly gave to His immediate followers, and taught them in explicit terms; and therefore enjoined upon us who, after many generations, have come into the inheritance of their standing and privilege.¹

¹ Yet, on the surface, the Prayer that was taught has its reflection in the Prayer that was uttered. In his essay on "The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church," to which reference has already been made, Bishop Chase maintains that the "same great spiritual realities lie at the root of both." Hence, though there is great "difference as to surroundings and form of expression," there are "striking points of contact." The Bishop presents the following comparison between the petitions of the formula and the words found in John xvii: *Our Father which art in heaven* with *Father* in vv. 1, 5, 21, 24; with *Holy Father* in v. 11; and with *Righteous Father* in v. 25. *Hallowed be Thy Name* with vv. 6, 11, 12, 26. *Thy Kingdom come* with vv. 1 f. *Thy will be done*, etc., with vv. 4 f., 11, 21. *Bring us not into temptation*, etc., with vv. 12, 15. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 110, 111.)

(2) THE DAILY PRAYER

In giving the Prayer, our Lord was not providing for occasions that were special or exceptional—in other words, for emergencies and the surprise experiences of life. Rather, He was providing for the common and everyday needs of His followers. Hence, all the clauses come into relation with that which touches bodily sustenance—the petition for bread, which in Matthew reads “Give us THIS DAY,” in Luke, “Give us DAY BY DAY.”

Thus the petition for daily food designates the ordinance as a whole as the Daily Prayer. From first to last the words are for every day; therefore, with good reason, the Early Church knew the formula as *Oratio Quotidiana*, THE DAILY PRAYER. In fact, among Jewish converts, it took the place of those prayers that were offered three times a day, “evening, morning, and noonday,” under the Old Covenant.¹ The words were suited, not for particular days merely, but for all days, from the time when the believer first approached the Father through the Son, to the time when he might “finish his course with joy.”

Needless to say, the Prayer was never designed to supply the place, on the one hand of the secret devotions which the Master Himself was careful to enjoin, or, on the other hand, of the special petitions which varying circumstances might suggest or seem to demand (Matt. vi. 6; Luke xviii. 1; cf. Phil. iv. 6).²

¹ See the *Didachē* (chap. viii.) and the *Apostolical Constitutions* (Book vii. chap. xxiv.). The Fathers specify the third, sixth, and ninth hours. The origin of the Jewish custom may be found in Ps. lv. 17; Dan. vi. 10.

² The disciples of the Jerusalem Rabbis understood that they were free, at the hour of prayer, to *add* any petitions which they thought were not expressed with precision in the “Fountain” given by their teacher—only

(3) THE DISCIPLES' PRAYER

The giving of the Prayer brought the followers of Christ into a special relation to their Master. Having turned aside from the Synagogue, they walked with Him, and watched His every word and deed. Though not of Judæa, yet, by giving the Prayer, our Lord acted the part of a Rabbi, and in due course He was alluded to as such (John i. 38, 49, iii. 2, 26, vi. 25). In fact, He safeguarded the relation when He said: "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Teacher, and all ye are brethren" (Matt. xxiii. 8).

Hence the Prayer was THE DISCIPLES' PRAYER, because given to them with a command to use it, "When ye pray, SAY." It was the Prayer of the Faithful — *Oratio Fidelium* — of men who followed Christ, attended upon Him; of men who, consequently, were on pilgrimage, were travellers, or "heavenly footmen." Accordingly, as the terms of the Prayer make clear, it was for men who led a dependent life, whose one concern was the cause of Christ, out of devotion to which they had "left all" in the spirit of discipleship and service. Quite obviously, then, the Prayer is unsuited to the circumstances of men whose portion is in this life—men whose hearts are set upon earthly things. How can such sanctify the Name of God, seek the coming of the Kingdom, and the rest? As for food supply, moral order, spiritual guidance—these THEY can undertake for themselves!

Designed for disciple-pilgrims, the Prayer is for such

all must be in the plural number. The same liberty was from the first enjoyed by the disciples of the Galilean Rabbi, when offering "prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." See Lightfoot's WORKS, vol. xi. pp. 143, 144.

as realise that "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." It was given by One who "had not where to lay His head." That, in some measure at least, the early Christians learned this lesson, is clear from the Epistle to Diognetus, *circa* 150 A.D.:

While they dwell in cities of Greeks and Barbarians, as the lot of each is cast, and follow the native customs in dress and food and other modes of living, yet they show the constitution of their own polity to be wonderful and admittedly marvellous. They dwell in their own countries, but as sojourners; they take their share in all things as citizens, and [yet] endure all things as foreigners. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every fatherland is foreign. . . . They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh; they have their existence on earth, but their citizenship in heaven.¹

It is to this manner of life that the Prayer is properly related; and the words cannot be used with fitness and sincerity by those who are out of sympathy with the pilgrim plan of the Gospel. On the other hand, its use should ever attune the hearts of true followers of Christ to the joyous utterance of the Apostle: "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. iii. 10).

(4) THE MISSIONARY PRAYER

The men to whom, in the first instance, the Prayer was given, were called to the side of Christ, not merely for companionship, but for active service. They were not only to be learners in the school of which He was the Teacher, but they were also to be preachers in a movement of which He was the Leader. In a word, the Twelve were chosen, "that they might be with Him,

¹ EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS, ed. Walford (1908), chap. v.

and that He might SEND THEM FORTH TO PREACH." As He was sent forth from the Father, so they were sent forth from the Son—to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom, and to heal diseases among the people (Mark iii. 14; Luke ix. 2; John xx. 21). And as they accompanied their Master up and down the land, sometimes as sheep in the midst of wolves, by this their daily prayer they sought the Divine protection and support, also the blessing of Heaven upon their Message.

Did they preach the Gospel of the Kingdom? Then the opening petitions were: "Hallowed be Thy Name: Thy Kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Were they conscious of "foes within and fears without"? Then they were constant in the petition: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And giving their time and energies to the service of Christ, they threw themselves upon the providing bounty of God by the daily petition for bread.

Like the men to whom it was given, the Prayer was MISSIONARY. And must not the missionary spirit have a place in the minds of all who offer it from the heart? Whatever may be the personal thoughts of those who send them forth and support them, the missionary workers themselves, in a spirit of self-renunciation, range their petitions under two heads, even as in the Missionary Prayer: (1) The glory of God—"Thy Kingdom come"; (2) personal difficulties and dangers—"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Every clause of the Prayer rings true to missionary need and desire.

(5) THE SOCIAL PRAYER

There is no individualism in the petitions that make up the Prayer. In this respect there is a fundamental

difference between the Prayer of the Master Himself, as found in John xvii., and the Prayer which He gave to His servants or disciples. Look at the Lord's Great High-Priestly prayer. In the course of twenty-two verses (John xvii. 4 to end), the pronoun of the First Person Singular occurs over fifty times in the common English Versions ("I"—thirty times; "Me"—twenty-three times in the A.V., and twenty-four times in the R.V.); and in addition there are many other indications of the unique personality of the Divine Son—"My," "Mine," "Myself." We must therefore recognise that the Prayer in the singular number was offered spontaneously, not taught to others; it has never had a name or designation such as was given in early days to the Prayer in the plural number, which was TAUGHT, and therefore was sure to acquire a name, e.g. *The Lord's Prayer*.

This Prayer is characterised by plural pronouns, and therefore is SOCIAL. Consider the terms—*Our* Father; give *us*; forgive *us*; lead *us*; deliver *us*; with *we* and *our* (three times) all in harmonious agreement. Every one who addresses the Father in these words associates himself with the entire brotherhood of believers; no one can offer the Prayer in true singleness of heart, and at the same time be indifferent to the circumstances of those of like precious faith. In this formula each prays for all in respect of a common desire and need—spiritual, moral, and physical. Dr. Stanford has some helpful words on this aspect of the Prayer:

If we believe in the real power of prayer, we must believe that this Prayer, which we offer as a family, has real power to bless us as a family. I gain good from it as offered by my brothers and sisters; they gain good from it as offered by me. In some sense, sometimes traceless, but always true, multitudes whom I have never heard of, and who have never heard of me,

are the better for it. Ordained of God, it has an instrumental value and a mystic potency in fetching down daily supplies, daily applications of forgiving love, daily shelters from temptation, and daily deliverances from evil in which all the children share.

"There is a certain spiritual traffic of piety betwixt all God's children, wherein they exchange prayers with each other. Am I weak in spirit and faint in my supplication? I have no less share in the holiest suppliants than in my own; whilst there is life in their devotions, I cannot go unblest." Such is Bishop Hall's commentary. And Leighton, with the like spirit, says: "Every believer hath a share in the prayers of all the rest; he is a partner in every ship of that kind that goes out to sea, and hath a portion in all their gainful voyages."¹

In a word, when giving the Prayer, the Master taught the lesson which the Apostle Paul had to emphasise, that we are "members one of another"—"whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (Eph. iv. 25; 1 Cor. xii. 25). Thus, for the family or the larger circle, the Prayer which is daily, pilgrim, and missionary, is likewise *social*, expressing common desires and aspirations. It is a plural prayer, because, while One is our Master, even Christ, "ALL WE ARE BRETHREN."²

(6) THE FILIAL PRAYER

From another point of view, the giving of the Prayer brings us into the presence of a truly great event. With the disciples, in a significant sense, old things now passed away, and all things became new. Henceforth their prayers go up to "Our Father"; and accordingly, among themselves, they constitute a brotherhood.

¹ THE LORD'S PRAYER, pp. 69, 70.

² See Chapter V., *ante*.

By the spirit of sonship conferred upon them by their Master, they cry *Abba*, or pray "Father." Quite naturally, the form which teaches this receives the name of THE FATHER PRAYER. Before looking at that fundamental relation, however, we note the necessary corollary—it is THE FILIAL PRAYER, given to the Children of God.

Those who can pray in the words of the *Paternoster*—those to whom the words are proper—are Children of God. Their relation to Christ may be that of disciples; but their relation to God is that of Sons—members of the Family of the First-born. As we know, one reason for the incarnation is declared by the Apostle to the Gentiles to have been "to redeem them that were made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 1-4).

If given for those who, as disciples of Christ, were children of God, it follows that the Prayer was not intended merely for some interval of time, say (as some have suggested), between the Incarnation and Ascension of our Lord. Rather, as representing and focalising the deepest truth in the teaching of Christ, it is of abiding value and force. All the elements of prayer and praise as they are expressed in the formula, are eminently becoming in twentieth-century believers: we must still glorify God as in the first part and supplicate His favour as in the second part.

How then can we set aside the Prayer as temporary, or regard it as a spent obligation? In the Early Church, as we have seen, the Prayer was regarded as the birthright privilege of believers, and only those who had the spirit of adoption were expected to utter the words. That, in the course of time, the Prayer became a formal utterance, is but a realisation in the Church

of the mistake that had already been made in the Synagogue, where the rehearsal of the *Shema'* ("Hear, O Israel") was reckoned as a meritorious act, demanding attention though without any appeal to the heart. This mistake, however, tells nothing against the Prayer and the holy intention of the Lord who gave it.

In the Prayer as a whole, the child of God should see a marvellous provision for his comfort and security. As from day to day experiences vary, we cannot accept such eloquent compilations as some have ventured to propose: times of sorrow or contradiction will assuredly compel the omission or modification of petitions that are unsuited to particular circumstances. No such dispensable clause is found, however, in the Filial Prayer. Faithful followers of Christ may at any time use the whole without picking or choosing—a manifest proof of the Master's wisdom, and also of the high design which actuated Him in giving the Prayer.

(7) THE FATHER PRAYER

While rightly answering to the designations found in Church History, some of which we have endeavoured to indicate, the Prayer finds its simplest (and most attractive) name in the Aramaic word *Abba*: it is THE FATHER PRAYER. This designation, which we owe to the Jewish custom of naming literary compositions, short as well as long, by their initial words, is at the same time true to the fundamental teaching and primary note of the Prayer.

In an Appendix, we set forth the grounds for identifying the Prayer with the *Abba*, that is to say, "Father," which, as St. Paul tells us, in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv., the Spirit of Sonship led the Christians to

"cry," or to utter in prayer.¹ It must suffice here to say that it was customary (and still is) among the Jews to designate or cite documents by their first words. On the one hand, for instance, the Book of Genesis, in fifty chapters, was called *Bereshith* ("In the beginning"); and on the other hand, the familiar exclamation, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," consisting of six words in the Hebrew, was called the *Shema'* ("Hear!").²

As we have seen, the Jews could already pray "Father," and could even speak of the Creator as "our Father in heaven." Yet not until Christ gave the Prayer which is occupying our thoughts, had they any idea of the simple appeal and direct approach which the "Our Father" inculcates.³ Now for the first time there was a "Fountain" prayer by which in few words every blessing was sought from "our Father in heaven"; and that being so, there was a composition which, in the homes of the faithful in Israel, might properly pass under the name *Abba*. Equally the name of the Prayer outside Israel would be "Father"; and as if to indicate that fact, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, in both the passages just mentioned, follows the Aramaic *Abba* with the Greek *ὁ πατήρ*.

When, in reply to their request, Christ taught His disciples "to pray," in reality He taught them A PRAYER. Never was there the like before. The formula enshrined a truth which, though new at the time, is not antiquated to-day. We wait for no future dispensation to justify

¹ See p. 262, *infra*.

² Originally consisting of one verse only, Deut. vi. 4, the *Shema'* subsequently included other passages. See p. 5, note.

³ See Wisdom ii. 16, 18, v. 5; cf. John v. 18; Ps. xxii. 8; Matt. xxvii. 43. Also Singer's edition of the DAILY PRAYER BOOK, pp. 55-60, 62, 69, 70, 76, 161.

the words of address, "Our Father." "Now are we the sons of God." Of the Prayer given by John the Baptist nothing is known; of that given by our Lord we may say that it abideth continually, because the sonship of believers is a standing and dignity that will not be superseded by any relation more truly blessed. In a word, the Prayer is a monument of the instruction given by Christ in reference to the Father whom He came to reveal. Before ever it was written in the Gospel records, however, it had been inscribed on the fleshy tablets of the hearts of those who accepted the Master's call. And as the words passed from lip to lip, they became the nucleus and foundation of a widespread sentiment of loving devotion. The experiences of the disciples of early days are typical of those upon which we ourselves have entered; and the Prayer which they received, and held with such tenacity, has, in the providence of God, come down to us—to us whose needs and sorrows, desires and fears, are like those that governed and beset the men who were called from the shores of Gennezaret.

In the passages to which reference has been made, the object of the Apostle is to set forth the true blessedness of the believer as a child of God. In the Epistle to the Romans the argument is restrained but clear: not till we reach chapter viii. do we come within view of the highest privilege of those who please God—"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God . . . heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." It is here that, indirectly, the Apostle indicates the position of privilege: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of sonship, whereby we cry Abba, Father." *Ye* on your part; *we*, the whole of us, CRY. The right thus expressed is one that is

common to all the children of God—they call God FATHER, pray to Him so, as the Master taught His disciples when He gave the OUR FATHER.

The argument is much the same in the Epistle to the Galatians. The Apostle declares believers to be sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and, "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." In other words, as the Son addressed the Father, so do we; as He taught, so we have learned—"wherefore, we are no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ." The same point is reached as in the Epistle to the Romans—sonship and joint-heirship with Christ. And this glorious lesson, developed by the Apostle, was taught by Christ when He gave the "OUR FATHER," the Prayer which, in the Aramaic of the time, was designated *Abba*, and in the prevailing Greek, *ὁ πατήρ*.

Though no direct account has come down to us of the way in which the Prayer became implanted (as it was deeply implanted) in the consciousness of the Early Church, it is obvious that, like the other ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, it asserted its own place in compliance with the design of the Divine Giver. The passages which we have considered explain the implication of the Prayer as it sets forth the sonship of believers; and they assuredly afford ground for the statement that, from the very first, the words were precious. Moreover, the Prayer was a privilege from the beginning, even as (by many) it is regarded to-day, as given forth from millions of lips week by week in the assemblies of the saints. And the deepest note is Father—*Father of us*, OUR FATHER.

The Fatherhood of which the Prayer speaks was

very emphatic in its appeal to the first believers. Our Lord safeguarded the very word when He said: "Call no man Father on earth; for one is your Father, He who is in heaven" (Matt. xxiii. 9). Well might the Apostle speak of God as the Archetype of the paternal relation, by saying that "of Him all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named" — He is Father Supreme (Eph. iii. 14). Such a Fatherhood implies a Sonship unique in glory and nobility; and with the Person of Christ we may combine the Church of the Firstborn, the joint-heirs, whose family privilege it is to say, "Our Father":

"Our Father" is the hallowed sound
They breathe from day to day!
Trained by His love their steps are found
In the same heavenward way;
Their joys are one, alike their fears,
The same bright hope their exile cheers.¹

¹ From Mrs. H. Whittemore's hymn beginning "How sweet to think."

CHAPTER XVI

SOME THINGS THAT EMERGE

Obligation to the Prayer—Parallel Thoughts in the Epistles—A Prayer for To-day—Biblical and Unique—An Ordinance of Christ.

AS we view the work of Christ, and bear in mind the characteristics and prejudices of the Jewish nation, we are led to ask, Who and what manner of Man was this Galilean who led the crowds and gave to those who followed Him as disciples a Prayer which, while serving as a token of His high claims as a Prophet sent from God, remains to this day as a monument of His gracious ministry? Bearing in mind the unreality of the poetical prayers of the Synagogue, we cannot but suppose that many whose hearts were directed Godward, would hunger and thirst for a means of communion such as their teachers and leaders had failed to provide. The sincerity which the Lord's Prayer presupposes, and the simplicity of the terms in which it was couched, would at once commend it to such as were discontented with the Synagogue—to such as were reaching out hands of faith to the God of their life. And the Gospel story affords us here and there a glimpse of the depth of comfort which such men found in the instruction given them by Christ.

Obligation to the Prayer.

At a glance we see that Christ taught a Prayer to show HOW. Is there any more helpful method of instruction? Lay down rules, and even then, if you are "apt to teach," you must proceed to supply illustrations and examples. Again and again, our Lord set forth the principles; and in the introduction to the Prayer, as given in the Sermon on the Mount, He gave the rules, both positive and negative. But He gave the Prayer as well; and the Prayer is the Christian type in concrete form—"after this manner, therefore, pray ye." By one example, acceptable for all times and circumstances, our Lord shows HOW. It is not *a form*, but THE FORM; and the design is to lead all who pray to see their filial standing, and to exercise the simple and direct confidence which belongs to sonship. Compared with things Jewish, the teaching is revolutionary; and with other conceptions of prayer no comparison is possible. Our Lord marked a new dispensation by a new practice, based on a new principle, thus dispensing with the "old bottles" of earlier days.

If, in the passage of the centuries, in this Christian dispensation, we have learned the primary lessons in prayer—namely, simplicity of expression and directness of petition—how has it come about? It has come about because the characteristics named are on the very surface of the Lord's Prayer. Certain it is that Judaism has not inculcated these lessons, nor have they been brought into the Church from ethnic religions. Do we ask of God in simplicity? It is because the Lord's Prayer has shown us how. Do we speak to God in terms that are plain and direct? It is for the

same sufficient reason. And the Prayer to which we owe so much will never be outgrown. Pursue the thought :

The Prayer is an example of the essential simplicity of true religion. Since our needs are few, our prayers should be simple. For the real answer to our prayers is God Himself: all that God gives, all that God *is*: life and light, truth and love. In the Lord's Prayer we ask for that which constitutes the true life of man, and for all else only in so far as it ministers to that life. It is the supplication of one whose eye is single, who has overcome all inward unrest, all division of mind, all anxious care; who in his prayer commits himself to *Him that is able to do* for His children *exceeding abundantly, above all that they ask or think*, and Who makes *all things work together for good to them that love Him* (Eph. iii. 20; Rom. viii. 28).¹

Of the "Our Father" it may be said with confidence that it has never limited the vision or contracted the desires of any reverent soul. Can the same be said of any human compilations? On the one hand, this Prayer has kept many from barren sentiment; and on the other, in the breast of multitudes it has implanted the seeds of true piety and trust in God. Thanks be unto God for the spirit of adoption whereby, in obedience to our Lord's instruction in regard to prayer, we cry ABBA, *i.e.* "Father."

Parallel Thoughts in the Epistles.

Into the Lord's teaching regarding the Father, the Apostolic Church entered as into a rich inheritance. The Master having ascended to "my Father and your Father," and "the promise of the Father" having been given in the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, local churches were formed under the ministry of the Apostle to the Gentiles and other servants of Christ. We have already

¹ R. L. Ottley, THE RULE OF WORK AND WORSHIP, p. 24.

suggested that St. Paul recalled the Prayer in those passages of his writings that attributed "crying *Abba*, Father" to the fact that believers were indwelt by the spirit of sonship which qualified for the use of the "Our Father" = FATHER OF US. There are, however, other parallel thoughts in the Epistles.

In days of trial and persecution the early disciples were enabled to "quit them like men" and "be strong" from a filial consciousness based upon the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood, thus taking for granted all that Christ had taught on the subject. Is anything less than this behind the significant fact that St. Paul opened his various Epistles with a benediction in some such words as these: "Grace to you, and peace from God OUR FATHER"?

An interesting parallel to the petition for protection from sin and evil is found in 2 Tim. iv. 18, where we read: "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto His Heavenly Kingdom; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." If there is not a reproduction of words, there is almost certainly an application of thought: note the "deliver" and the "from evil," the same words as in the concluding petition of the Prayer. As for the words of doxology, they illustrate the formula which we have not been able to retain at the close of the Prayer; and, what is more, they show how common such forms were in the language of adoration.

Again and again it has been pointed out by expositors that the First Epistle of Peter accords in a remarkable manner with the Prayer. The expressions were thus compared by Bengel:

Our: ch. i. 4, at the end. *Father*: ch. i. 3, 14, 17, 23; ii. 2. *In heaven*: ch. i. 4, at the end. *Hallowed be Thy*

Name: ch. i. 15, 16; iii. 15. *Thy Kingdom come*: ch. ii. 9. *Thy will be done*: ch. ii. 15; iii. 17; iv. 2, 19. *Daily bread*: ch. v. 7. *Forgiveness of sins*: ch. iv. 8, 1. *Temptation*: ch. iv. 12. *Deliverance*: ch. iv. 18. And, besides, Peter makes repeated and express reference to prayer: ch. iii. 7; iv. 7.¹

A striking case of verbal parallel may be detected in 1 John ii. 12, 13, where, addressing "little children," the Apostle speaks of "sins forgiven" because "ye know the Father"; and, again, writing to "young men," he speaks of their having overcome "the evil one"—apparently alluding to two clauses of the Prayer, and specifying the invocation, "Father."

A Prayer for To-day.

On several pretexts it has been maintained that the Lord's Prayer is not for the Gospel dispensation.

(I.) It has been objected by some that the Prayer cannot be for believers in the present age because it "*takes no account of the death of Christ.*" Though seeming to have some force, the objection is in reality fallacious. Why not qualify (and neutralise) the entire ministry of Christ on the same ground of objection? Is it answered, in extenuation, that in His ministry generally our Lord looked forward to His death? Agreed; and in that ministry, looking forward to His death, He gave the Prayer which we have been considering in its various aspects. The Prayer was given by the same Lord who afterwards yielded His life for "us men and for our salvation." As well plead that Baptism and the Holy Supper are antiquated because instituted "the other side of Calvary"! Should we not see that, given as they were in the days of our Lord's ministry, these ordinances were enriched

¹ Bengel's GNOMON, note on 1 Pet. i. 3.

by the circumstances of His suffering and death, and thereby invested with an abiding significance to the faithful disciple?

It is right that everything should be regarded from the standpoint of Calvary and the empty tomb; but it is impossible for the reverent mind to suggest that the gracious ministry of our Lord was in reality detached from this climax. If, however, we desiderate that the public work of Christ should derive worth and value from His sacrificial death, is it not because, without telling us all about it, our Heavenly Father has so ordered? And therefore all the acts of Christ come in the dispensation of the Gospel, and none of them can be reckoned as belonging to things that have "vanished away."

Whatever other teachers, of an earlier day, might bring from God as instruction to men—truth now associated with a past dispensation—we must be on our guard against thinking that the Christ of God—our Master and Lord—served in such a ministry. Rather, appearing "in the end of the ages"—in "the fulness of time,"—He brought truth that was to abide, to serve His Church "until He come." The Prayer has its place in the same dispensation as the Supper and Baptism, and in explicit terms it looks forward to the coming Kingdom. It is thus that we distinguish the Master's ministry from that of men who came before, as it were heralding His advent. We can understand them in their part of inaugurating unfoldings of the Divine will for a season or a generation; but we must look upon the work of Christ as special and consummating. Hence we find the Prayer which He gave to be a model in every sense, and one which is still to command our heart's devotion—a warp upon

which we may weave all we desire to place before our Heavenly Father in prayer.

(II.) On the other hand, it has been confidently affirmed that the Lord's Prayer "*belongs to the Kingdom*," as distinct from the Church: hence, is a form of words either (1) proposed to the generation that rejected Christ, or (2) held in reserve for some future dispensation. The whole point is "carried" by the statement that the Prayer formed part of the Sermon on the Mount; but quite obviously, the statement does not, in reality, "carry" the point. The question is—to whom was the Prayer given—to outsiders or to those who followed Christ? Most assuredly to the latter, for we read that He "went up into the mountain" to get away from "the multitudes," and when "HIS DISCIPLES came unto Him," He taught THEM (Matt. v. 1, 2). That explains the first instruction; and the second is equally clear: "One of HIS DISCIPLES said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray; and He said unto THEM, When YE pray, say."

Thus we are compelled to admit that the Prayer was given to Christ's own followers—those who trusted and loved Him; not to the outside world that persecuted and rejected Him. How then can it (as a spent force, or an institution yet in abeyance) "belong to the Kingdom"? One of its clauses decides the issue: "Thy Kingdom come." It is the Church that offers this petition, looking forward to the coming glory of Christ. The Church to-day stands where the first disciples stood; and the whole form one family, compacted together in the loving intercession of the Master Himself. Recall His words: "Neither for these [the first disciples] only do I pray; but for them also [the great body of believers to the end of the age] that shall believe through their word" (John xvii. 20).

(III.) It is also objected that when the Prayer was given "*the Holy Spirit had not been manifested.*" Then was the Master without the Holy Spirit? Of whom do we read: "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for He giveth not the Spirit by measure" (John iii. 34)? Such an objection to the Prayer is in reality a reflection (though unintended) upon the Lord who gave it.

(IV.) Again, it has been said that the Prayer is "*not in the Name of Christ.*" Here there is a confounding of things that differ. Prayer in the name of Christ, in the sense intended in John xiv. 13, 14, xv. 16, xvi. 23, 24, was never intended as a cancelling of daily and common prayer. Prayer "in the Name" is a pleading of the person and dignity and merit of Christ in special petitions before God.¹ The Lord's Prayer, being IN THE WORDS OF CHRIST, is assured of acceptance with the Father; and therefore, in a deep and true sense, is "IN HIS NAME."

Biblical and Unique.

Any one familiar with the Old Testament will acknowledge that the great words of the Prayer have been taken from its sacred phraseology. Attempts have been made to show that our Lord was independent of such sources of expression. While ready to allow that He might have been so, had it seemed good to Him, we are the more glad to observe that He employed the language which had been supplied in the writings of prophets, wise men, and scribes of the olden time. In this, as in other ways, the Law was "a schoolmaster

¹ For a study of this subject, and its relation to the Covenant of Redemption, see IN THE NAME: THE WARRANT OF PRAYER. by the present writer (1914).

to lead men to Christ." We may assuredly rejoice that God found pleasure in the words of worthies who, in their own time, prayed in a manner taught by men who "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. i. 21).

Though Dr. Charles Taylor and others have shown various phrases in the Lord's Prayer to correspond with Rabbinical expressions—found in writings which it is impossible to believe have in any degree been influenced by New Testament teaching—it is beyond dispute that the parallels exhibit remarkable contrasts as well as interesting resemblances. Certain it is that the spirit and tendency of the Synagogue prayers are not such as characterise the Lord's Prayer, by means of which, as we have endeavoured to explain, the Rabbinical forms were discredited and superseded in the circle of the first disciples of Christ. In the circumstances, accordingly, we must recognise that, while employing terms that were quite familiar in the midst of the Jewish community, our Lord gave forth a prayer altogether different from any that have come down to us from Rabbinical sources.

Those who have held the Lord's Prayer to be one of a class, have been compelled to turn over many weak and poor specimens in the endeavour to find similar compositions. A comparison of those that have been regarded as "most likely" yields little support to the argument. Edersheim gives two prayers which Gfrörer singled out as approaching somewhat to the Lord's Prayer:¹

(1) R. Samuel prayed:

Thanks and praise be to Thy name! Thine is the greatness, the power, and the glory! May it please Thee, O Lord our

¹ Edersheim's HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION, new edition (1896) by White, pp. 435, 436.

God, and the God of our fathers, to lift us up when we fall, and to raise us up when we are bowed down ; for Thou liftest up those that fall, and raisest up those that are bowed down. Thou art merciful, and beside Thee there is none. Blessed be the Lord !

(2) Bar Kappara prayed :

Before Thee do we bend, before Thee we bow, before Thee we fall down, and Thee alone do we adore. To Thee every knee shall bend, and every tongue confess. Thine, O Lord, is the majesty, the power, the glory, the victory, and the praise ; for what is in heaven, and what on earth, is Thine. Thine, Lord, is the kingdom, and Thou art exalted above all. Riches and honour are before Thee. Thou reignest over all, and in Thine hand are power and might. It is in Thy power to make anyone great or mighty. We bless Thee, O our God, and praise Thy glorious name. We adore Thee with all our heart and soul. All our members say, Who is like Thee, O God, who deliverest the needy from the mighty, and the poor from the hand of him that doeth violence !

These prayers have the features of the Synagogue liturgy ; but they are essentially dissimilar from the Lord's Prayer. A man might accept these, and use them regularly, while continuing to worship with Israel ; but to accept the Lord's Prayer involves a "coming out," and a following of Christ whom the Synagogue rejected. And assuredly the securing of this result was, as we have seen, and maintained, one of the reasons for the enunciation of the Prayer. Some have ventured to say of the Lord's Prayer that it could be uttered by Jews while still attached to the Synagogue. The statement implies misapprehension as to the Jewish mind. Most certainly the pious Israelite would inquire whose prayer he was asked to use. Should he then accept the words, it would be because dis-

posed to follow the great Rabbi who had given them forth.

If there is difference between the Prayer given by Christ and those that had Rabbinical sanction in Israel, how great is the gulf between the Model Prayer and compositions that passed under that name among the heathen! In the words of Bruce:

Pagan prayer corresponded to the nature of pagan deities—indifferent, capricious, unrighteous, unloving; much-speaking, iteration, dunning, was needed to gain their ear. How blessed if the whole pantheon could be swept away, or fall into contempt, and the one worshipful Divinity be, in fact, worshipped, “as in heaven, so also on earth.”¹

Yet, as we have seen, in their much speaking, the Jews had simply imitated the surrounding nations. And the Master's words were explicit: “And in praying use not vain repetitions, AS THE GENTILES.” Thus the *battologising* practice, though Hebrew in development, was after the manner of the benighted peoples around Israel, who “thought they should be heard for their much speaking.”²

An Ordinance of Christ.

To appreciate the scope of the Prayer, we must bear in mind the circumstances of its promulgation. When the disciples of John followed Him, they thereby showed a dissatisfaction with the dead moderatism of the Synagogue. In like manner, when the men whom our Lord called followed HIM, they evinced a desire for something better than the Synagogue offered. In these circumstances, “Teach us to pray,” or “Teach us

¹ EXPOSITOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT, Comment on Matt. vi. 9.

² See p. 38, *ante*.

a prayer," has a deep significance. Primarily, it meant there was a willingness to accept the teaching of Christ regarding the soul's communion with its Maker. As a man and woman of our day, rescued from heathenism in China or India, in Africa or the South Sea Islands, instinctively says to the missionary, "Teach me a prayer," "Give me help on the subject of heart-communion with God," and thereby places himself or herself under the Christian teacher for instruction leading to spiritual peace, so the disciples at the first, by accepting the Lord's Prayer, went far towards dissociating themselves from the Synagogue.

As given by the Great Teacher, the Prayer supplied acceptable words for the daily and common, the customary and regular, approach of the children to the Father. It was a form, a catena of phrases of devotion; but it was given with the express object of relieving worship from the bondage and burden of lifeless formalism.¹ Given by Him who, in the very Sermon on the Mount in which it was first spoken, set aside counsels and practices that were dear to those of old time, it continues, by reason of a Divine vitality, a monument of matchless ministry. In spite of a tendency of thought which suggests that Matthew compiled the Prayer from "Sayings" of Christ, a true instinct is to-day giving to the petitions as a whole, and in the form which we have received them, a place of prime significance in the life and labour of our Lord. At length, the Prayer is claimed as the rightful

¹ "The use of forms is not formalism. Formalism is the abuse of forms. But the fact that forms get abused is no reason for discarding them altogether, any more than the fact that liberty sometimes, and with some people, degenerates into licence, is a reason why we should all abjure our freedom. In fact, a certain amount of form is absolutely necessary" (J. D. Jones, in *THE MODEL PRAYER*, p. 160).

heritage of believers, in harmony with the ancient designation (already noticed), "The Prayer of the Faithful." There is, moreover, a growing sympathy with the early practice of confining the use of the words to those who, having "received the adoption of sons," can say from the heart "Our Father."

What follows? That which was recognised as a heritage of faith and received as a privilege of discipleship, became a mighty bond of fellowship, encompassing and cementing in a body the people of God. Before the days when Creeds and Confessions had been compiled by way of explaining to the outside world the beliefs and practices of the followers of Christ, the Lord's Prayer afforded day by day an occasion for believers to associate themselves with their Master in the use of the words He gave, and to realise the solidarity of their discipleship in the plural petitions which they uttered. By and by persecution would still further compact the little flock; already, however, they were bound to one another by the influence of a common prayer.

Thus the Prayer and its ministry in the Early Church supplies an answer to a familiar question. Again and again it has been asked, What kept the disciples together before the formulation of the Creeds and Confessions? The point was thus expressed by Bishop Westcott:

There can be little doubt that the Apostles' Creed, in its main substance, represents the Baptismal confession of the middle of the second century. But as such it assumes the fact of communion with the Christian Body. It does not therefore contain any articles in regard to the Institutions through which the Divine facts set forth in it are brought home to men.¹

¹ THE HISTORIC FAITH, Preface.

What, we ask, were the "Institutions" that "brought home the Divine facts"? It will readily be answered: "The ordinances," commonly called the *sacraments*. Doubtless; but there was an ordinance additional to the two upon which Christian people have combined and divided throughout the centuries. That ordinance, that institution, was the LORD'S PRAYER. He who said: "Go . . . make disciples . . . baptize"; and "Take ye . . . eat . . . drink . . . in remembrance of Me," is the same Blessed Master that, a short time before, and with the same Divine authority, had said: "AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY YE" . . . "WHEN YE PRAY, SAY." If the two ordinances known as sacraments have been the means of blessing to many, so also has the other, the Prayer, been such, and in an eminent degree. And as we well remember, this last-named, like the other ordinances of Christ, has been the subject of keen controversy, leading to much variety in doctrine and practice.

The Prayer and its influence show very plainly that it was no mere form. Like the other ordinances, it was a vehicle of truth, and an expression of reality. In order of time, the Prayer was the first ordinance of Christ; and while it brought the earliest disciples into intimate relations with their Master, it has kept many of their successors in the enjoyment of a like blessing. It was, indeed, the primary institution through which the "Divine facts" (to use the words of Bishop Westcott) were set forth before men; and it was, by intention and in experience, a bond of spiritual union in the infant Christian community which accepted such "Divine facts."

Though involving a digression, we make bold to suggest that, strictly speaking, the ordinances of Christ

are FOUR in number, two of them having their sphere *within* the society of believers, and two of them *without* that society. Glance at these Divine imperatives :

I. Two to be observed among the faithful :

(1) **The Lord's Prayer.** United witness to Christ: words wherein believers approach the Father in petitions ordered by the Son. Hereby disciples of Christ realise their filial standing, and affirm their brotherhood in service. "Thy Kingdom come." *Communion in prayer in the following of Christ.* "When ye pray, say" . . . "The spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

(2) **The Lord's Supper.** Symbolical and confessional: acts instituted for reverent observance, wherein the disciples, in fellowship one with another, commemorate the death of their Lord. "Till He come." *Communion in worship in the remembrance of Christ.* "Take, eat; this is My body . . . Drink . . . this is My blood" (ostensibly ceremonial and sacramental).

II. Two to be followed before the world :

(3) **Preaching.** Witness to Christ before the world: a duty assigned to disciples for the benefit of outsiders. By this means "such as are being saved" are "added to the Lord." *Witnessing for Christ.* "Go . . . preach the Gospel."

(4) **Baptism.** Symbolical and confessional: acts whereby men and women, on joining the Christian community, become "united with Christ." Hereby believers take their stand before the world. *Confession of Christ.* "Go . . . baptizing" (ostensibly ceremonial and sacramental).

We must not linger on the ordinances. Suffice it to say that, as given to the Church of Christ, they all speak of communion with God, though in varying aspects—(1) in devotion, (2) in adoration, (3) by service, (4) by confession. All of them aim at the glory of God—in *the following of Christ* (the Prayer);

in *remembrance of Christ's death* (the Supper); in *witnessing for Christ* (Preaching); in *confessing Christ* (Baptism). CHRIST—"first, midst, and last." He gave all the commands, and in proportion as we observe and obey, we honour the GIVER.

We may, indeed, use our own words in prayer, and we may use the words of others; but the words of our Lord and Master should by no means be ignored or passed by. Expressive of every daily need, and comprehensive in a sense that is not reached by the compositions of men, the Lord's Prayer was taught that it might be learned, given forth that it might be reverently used. Accordingly, on grounds that have been expounded only too briefly, we maintain that it was promulgated in order that, by its means, the disciples might realise and proclaim the Divine Fatherhood, and, by consequence, come into the enjoyment of that spiritual brotherhood which is the corollary of its initial message. And, with this blessed "standing" made secure, the petitions give continual reminder of the readiness of our Father in heaven to give and forgive, to lead and deliver, according to the faith of those who offer the Prayer.

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSION

The Prayer in Church History—Misuse and Misunderstanding
—Pre-eminent Excellence of the Prayer.

OUR task hastens to its conclusion. We set out to present an interpretation of the Prayer which our Lord taught His disciples; and in the light of Holy Scripture, examined with critical care, and of Jewish practices of devotion, as they have come down to us in an unyielding tradition, we have completed our work. As a result, we find in the Prayer an instrument of great significance in its witness to the Person of Christ, and of mighty influence in its bearing upon the Early Church.

We have seen in the giving of the Prayer an act that placed the ministry of Christ in a very definite light before men, even before such as viewed His conduct with critical gaze. The Man of Nazareth had assumed the rôle of Rabbi! As included in the Sermon on the Mount, the Prayer is (as the Puritans would say) "shut off" in the following words: "When Jesus ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at His teaching; for He taught them as one having

authority, and not as their scribes" (Matt. vii. 28, 29). Here, in fact, was a great Rabbi, though not of Judæa; and His teaching had an accent that was different from that expressed by those to whom the pious in Israel looked for light and guidance. His ministry was, no doubt, unconventional throughout; but assuredly it included no act more daring (from the point of view of the Pharisaic observer) than that of promulgating a prayer, by the influence of which men would be bound to Him in the relation of discipleship.

The setting of the Prayer in St. Luke's Gospel yields a similar observation. The records that follow the Prayer, as given on the second occasion, make it clear that our Lord was regarded as opposed to the Synagogue, and that the men who followed Him were looked upon as misguided and working injury to the cause of Israel. The Prayer was, in fact, reiterated in circumstances of social strain; and while this fact would confirm the disciples in their attachment to Christ, it would assuredly widen the gulf which separated them from the Synagogue. Thus, however received, the Prayer was an instrument of peculiar potency and influence: on the one hand, it dispensed those to whom it was given from periodical attendance at synagogue; and on the other hand, by a moral and spiritual compulsion, it led them, as learners in the school of Christ, to fix their eyes and hearts upon Him, and to know no other Master or Lord.

The Prayer in Church History.

So the Prayer came into Church History. Before ever a Creed had been formulated, it had the influence of a Creed. Moreover, as setting forth, in fewest words, the grounds of Christian confidence—the favour

of the Father being enjoyed through the mediation of the Son—it served as a bond of union among those who followed Christ, wherever they might be found. The early Fathers of the Church quote the Prayer and discuss its terms; and from their writings it is obvious that it was used daily as an approved and sufficient expression of the common needs of the faithful. In due time, however, the words became formal, and, like the ceremonial ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Prayer became a topic of debate—a string of phrases on which men expressed opinions, and with reference to which conflicting parties were formed. How far removed was this from the Master's intention, which was that, by means of the Prayer, we were (among other things) continually to come under instruction as to the Fatherhood of God and the (consequent) brotherhood of believers in Christ!

As we have seen, the Prayer came into the centuries as distinct from, and opposed to, the Prayers of the Synagogue: in fact, as the ordinance of One who denounced the constituted prayers of the Jewish people. By virtue of the Prayer, early converts to Christianity had something to do: if from Judaism, then they had to throw aside the artificial forms that had grown up during generations of spiritual declension; if from paganism, then they had to divest themselves of the ways of a still more dense ignorance, a still more corrupt manner of devotion. One and all, however, found comfort and direction in the Prayer which Christ taught His disciples. As the centuries passed, the Prayer was given a place with others, framed by godly men for use in Christian worship—prayers in the interest of different classes and for varied occasions in the Church. In the course of time, however, such prayers

as at first were regarded as additional became substantive; and hence the Lord's Prayer was looked upon as secondary, and accordingly proper to be dispensed with if such a course should be thought needful or desirable. Was this contemplated by our Lord? Should not the FATHER Prayer have been given the first consideration—have been treated as essential and immutable—and the additional prayers, of man's making, have been treated as negligible?

Misuse and Misunderstanding.

Days followed wherein the work of Christian instruction was more or less generally regarded as a setting of tasks, with young and old alike accepted as pupils. Then, with Creeds and Catechisms, which, however ancient and excellent, cannot be accorded the same authority and dignity as the Prayer, the "Our Father" was dealt with as an exercise. Then—one step further—men and women were esteemed intelligent or otherwise according as they were able (or not able) to utter a few ecclesiastical formulæ, the Lord's Prayer being included in the series! In the words of Bishop Latimer:

The common opinion and estimation which the people have had of this Prayer, the Lord's Prayer, I say, is far from that which it is indeed. For it was esteemed as nothing; for when we are disposed to despise a man, and call him an ignorant fool, we say he cannot say his *Pater-noster*; and so we make it a light matter, as though every man knew it. But I tell you it is a great matter; it contains weighty things if it is thoroughly examined, as a learned man could do.¹

The days of ignorance seem to have provoked the

¹ SEVEN SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, Sermon V.

measures that some good men adopted at this period. Latimer was so grieved at the darkness of his time that he made it a habit to repeat the Lord's Prayer before and after sermon, "that all that can it not, may learne." We likewise read of John Calvin, that he "ever concluded his prayer before or after sermon with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, conceiving it to be of good use to have these often sounding in the ears of the people." If the congregations were composed of Christian people, this practice was justified, but it is to be feared that by this procedure words that were intended for followers of Christ were suggested for repetition by unbelievers.

In course of time, the Prayer, having been misused, was still more seriously abused; and this brought on revulsion where there should have been reverence, prejudice where there should have been the exercise of reason. In a word, the Prayer was, so to speak, on the part of many, relegated to the limbo of dishonoured forms, Christian people seeming to forget that, after all, the words were given by their Lord. Hence, in quite recent times, when heard from the reading-desk or pulpit of churches of the non-liturgical order, the Prayer has been regarded as an unacceptable innovation.¹ In our day, however, a saner spirit prevails; and of late it has become customary, at conferences and conventions whereat believers from various "folds" gather for Christian stimulus and instruction, for meetings to be opened with prayer in the words which our Lord ordained; and thus it is shown that, of whatever denomination, they are "all one in Christ Jesus."

It is important to recognise that the words were never designed for mere repetition. In giving them,

¹ See Appendix VI. p. 269 ff., *infra*.

our Lord was explicit: "When ye PRAY, say." Thus He makes it plain that He provided, not merely for "religious exercises" in a bald and barren sense of the term, but for PRAYER. In the words of Dr. Stanford:

Mark the proviso. It implies that when we do *not* pray, we may *not* say it. The point is that we may only say it when we *do* pray. Prayer is a thing distinct from the vehicle of prayer. Beautiful as this frame is, it is only a vehicle of praying life, not a substitute for it. It is no rigid and iron enclosure holding prayers that are ready made for us; it is no petrified prayer, waiting outside our living selves; it is no mere lesson that we may learn with diligence and repeat with senseless accuracy, as birds learn to speak; it is no written Paternoster for priests or saints to touch and bless; it is no verbal spell to conjure with; but it is a Divine formula that we may use daily to our unspeakable advantage, and while it is a model it is also a mould through which we may pour out our new, living, flaming supplications.¹

The divisions that have vexed the Body of Christ have for the most part had their origin in misapprehension in regard to the ordinances. Rites that should have combined, have in reality parted asunder; and though (in the way they are received) giving individuality to sections, these rites have nevertheless involved the Body as a whole in weakness and distress. The Prayer seems, at length, to have outgrown the criticism and indifference of generations; and though as yet believers as a body do not see their way to the enjoyment of equal liberty at the Table of the Lord, there is a growing feeling that at the Throne of Grace all are ONE in the use of the Prayer which the Master taught His disciples.

¹ THE LORD'S PRAYER, pp. 47, 48.

Thus, to-day, preachers and teachers are in a position to view the Prayer in its Scriptural light, and apart from the feeling that has been fostered by controversies of past days. Workers on the mission field are showing the way. Every now and then one sees in mission reports, paragraphs which tell of simple believers in heathen lands requesting Christian teachers to "give them a short prayer." Sometimes the reply takes the form of words addressed to the Lord Jesus; at other times the missionary rises to the occasion and delivers that which he has himself received. Why should it not be the rule to teach the Lord's Prayer to those whose hearts are warm with love to the Saviour? Only good can come from instruction that places the Prayer before inquirers as a high and holy privilege, the rightful heritage (as in the Early Church) of all who confess Christ and take the Christian name.

Pre-eminent Excellence of the Prayer.

Not only does the Prayer teach us how to pray, but in a remarkable way it comes to the help of those who feel least able to order their words before God. Who can restrain prayer on the ground of mental inability or nervous weakness, when all that is required may be expressed in a few brief sentences? The backward worshipper has no longer any excuse. Let all take courage in view of this practical lesson of the Prayer.

The pre-eminent excellence of the Prayer has been the theme of learned and eloquent exposition; but on this one brief excerpt must suffice:

The Lord's Prayer is not one prayer among many, as you may have a number of collects for a number of different

objects, and each particular collect is just one prayer among many. The Lord's Prayer is rather the type and mould of all Christian prayer: "After this manner pray ye." Understand the Lord's Prayer, and you understand altogether how to pray as a Christian should. It is not really an exaggeration to say that the climax of Christian growth is to have thoroughly learned to say the Lord's Prayer in the spirit of Him who first spoke it.

And this has been clearly recognised in the use which the Church in all ages has made of the Lord's Prayer. . . . Almost all the ancient liturgies, both Eastern and Western, are so constructed that the point upon which each service converges is the saying of the Lord's Prayer. That is the point up to which they climb. . . .

That is their central act; because the highest thing in the way of worship that the Christian can do is to say Christ's own Prayer in the freedom of that approach to God once won for him by the Son of Man.¹

Attention to the Lord's Prayer and loyalty to its message, will do much to solve a problem which presses upon many a thoughtful mind—the problem of contradictory elements as they enter into the great volume of petition which daily ascends to the Throne of Grace. Whence come such elements of contradiction but from a disregard of the essentials of prayer as they are set forth in the OUR FATHER? If, in range and substance, our prayers were conformed to the teaching conveyed by this gracious ordinance of Christ, they would assuredly be free from the confusion which finds expression on the part of believers of different nationalities and conditions of life.

In days when patriotic and social causes dominate the minds of Christian people, and of necessity affect

¹ Bishop Gore, *THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT*, chap. vii.

them along conflicting lines, it becomes increasingly true that "We know not what to pray for as we ought." In the measure, however, that we frame our petitions along the lines of the Lord's Prayer, so we shall lift them clear of the chaotic, and relate them to the high purpose of God. Thus prayers will not traverse prayers as is sometimes the case at present; and men of varied views and judgments, as they join in prayer, will realise true communion, and ask things according to the will of God.

An impressive fact emerges from our study as a whole, and demands brief mention. The teaching of Christ as embodied in the Prayer, is a sublime development of truth which, in its elements, was already held in reverence by those to whom He was first manifested. He came to Israel, as He was careful to say, not to set aside the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them—not to abolish or abrogate their injunctions and sanctions, but to render a loving obedience, an honourable performance. In regard to the Law, by word and deed, He delivered His people from the bondage of error and misunderstanding; in regard to the Prophets, by precept and practice, He enlarged them into a truer loyalty to their words as holy men sent from God.

In brief, our Lord found in the Old Testament words, phrases, and other forms of expression that yielded a large measure of light regarding God and His righteousness, the Heavenly Father and His mercy and faithfulness. These, as handed down by the Synagogue, He invested with a fuller and deeper meaning, and presented in a form which taught higher and richer truths in regard to the Divine Fatherhood, and its implicate, the brotherhood of believers. This

was a development corresponding to that of fruit from seed, and flower from bud; and of the teaching by which it is expressed we have found the token and epitome in the Prayer which He taught His disciples.

As a *formula*, including "all our need"; as a *directory of devotion*, protecting us from "asking amiss"; as an *embodiment of doctrine*, comprehensive and stimulating in a high degree—the Prayer which we have sought to understand is as practically useful as it is pre-eminently excellent.

Among the earliest traditions of the Church is a compound saying, ascribed to our Lord: "Ask for the great things, and the small shall be added unto you"; and "Ask for the heavenly things, and the earthly shall be added unto you."¹ This is an echo of a recorded utterance of our Lord, made in the course of the Sermon on the Mount: "Seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things [the things of daily need] shall be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 33). The order is that of the Lord's Prayer, in which the Name, the Kingdom, and the Will of our Heavenly Father, come before the detailing of human needs as to bodily sustenance, spiritual pardon, and moral protection.

Manifestly the strength and comfort of disciples of Christ are involved, and that in no small degree, in the appropriation of this Divine lesson. And assuredly we may conclude that, styled as it has rightly been, "a regulator by which all ages should set their devo-

¹ Handed down by Origen. See Ropes, art. "Agrapha," in Hastings's *DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE*, extra vol., p. 349.

tions," the Prayer not only points the true sequence of petitions such as God will approve, but also expresses in acceptable words the common desires and continual requirements of all who pray "Thy Kingdom come."

APPENDIXES

I. THE LORD'S PRAYER—

- (I.) GREEK TEXT.
- (II.) THE VULGATE.
- (III.) HEBREW RENDERING.
- (IV.) ENGLISH VERSIONS.
- (V.) METRICAL FORMS.

II. "VAIN REPETITIONS": NOTES ON *BATTO-LOGEŌ*.

III. "OUR DAILY BREAD": NOTES ON *EPIOUSIOS*.

IV. "OUR DEBTS . . . OUR DEBTORS": NOTES ON "THE LORD'S RELEASE."

V. THE PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH: NOTES ON "*ABBA*, FATHER."

VI. IGNORANCE AND PREJUDICE.

APPENDIX I

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(MATT. vi. 9-13)

(I.) Greek Text—(II.) The Vulgate—(III.) Hebrew Rendering
—(IV.) English Versions—(V.) Metrical Forms.

I. GREEK TEXT, as followed by the Revisers of 1881—

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
 γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,
 ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.
 τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον.
 καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν,
 ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·
 καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν,
 ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Uncritical texts or authorities, followed by earlier translators, inserted τῆς before γῆς, and read ἀφίεμεν (or ἀφίομεν) instead of ἀφήκαμεν. In some cases, moreover, they added the familiar doxology: ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. ἀμήν.

II. THE VULGATE, as followed by JOHN WYCLIFFE and the Rheims Version—

Pater noster, qui es in caelis :

Sanctificetur nomen tuum.

Adveniat regnum tuum.

Fiat voluntas tua,

sicut in caelo, et in terra.

Panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie,

Et dimitte nobis debita nostra,

sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.

Et ne nos inducas in tentationem,

sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

III. HEBREW RENDERING

	Figures direct to Notes below.
אָבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים	I
יִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֶךָ :	2
תָּבֹא מַלְכוּתֶךָ :	3
יַעֲשֶׂה רְצוֹנְךָ	4
כְּבַשְׁמִים כְּבֹאֲרֵץ :	5
אֶת לֶחֶם מַתִּיתֵנוּ תֵּן לָנוּ הַיּוֹם :	6
וּשְׁמַרְנָא אֶת־חֲבוּתֵינוּ פֶּאֶר אֲשֶׁר גַּם אֲנַחְנוּ	7
הַיּוֹמִי עֲשִׂים שְׁמֶכָּה	
לְאֲשֶׁר הָיוּ חַיָּבִים לָנוּ :	8
וּבְמַסָּה אֵל תִּנְסְנוּ כִּי־אִם הַצִּילֵנוּ מִן־	9
הָרָע :	

*Hebrew Versions consulted.*¹

	Sign.
Hutter and Robertson, 1561	H-R.
Fry and Collyer, 1817	F-C.
William Greenfield, 1831	G.
London Jews Society's Version, edition of 1876	L.
Moses Margoliouth, 1876	M.
Franz Delitzsch, edition of 1904	D.
Salkinson and Ginsburg, edition of 1907	S-G.

- Line 1. So D., S-G., M. אבינו אשר בשמים, others.
- „ 2. So D., S-G. יְהוָה, F-C., L. יְהוָה, H-R., G.
- „ 3. So all seven versions.
- „ 4. So D., S-G., L. יהי רצונך.
- „ 5. So F-C., M. בארץ כאשר נעשה בשמים, S-G. כאשר בשמים גם בארץ, D.
- „ 6. So in this volume. See p. 127 ff., also Appendix III. (p. 232 ff.).
Other suggested renderings are : את לחמנו לחם מחיתנו ; or
את לחמנו אשר למחיה ; or את לחמנו אשר למחיה. Note, moreover,
לחם חקנו, D., S-G., M., G., F-C.
- „ 7. So in this volume. See p. 136, also Appendix IV. (p. 256 ff.).
וסלח לנו את חבותינו, S-G. וסלח לנו את אשמתנו,
H-R., F-C. G., L., M. וסלח לנו על חבותינו, D.
- „ 8. Versions vary according to terms used in line 7.
- „ 9. לידי נסיון, S-G. לידי סטה, F-C., G., L. ואל תביאנו לסטה,
D., M.—הצילנו. So all except D., which gives גָּמְלָנוּ.—
מן הרע. So D., G., L., S-G. מרע, H-R., F-C., M.

IV. ENGLISH VERSIONS²

(MATT. vi. 9-13)

I. JOHN WYCLIFFE, about A.D. 1380.

Revised by JOHN PURVEY, about A.D. 1388.

Oure fadir that art in heuenes, halewid be thi name ;
thi kyngdoom come to ; be thi wille don in erthe as

¹ All of them versions of the New Testament as a whole, except Margoliouth, whose rendering is given in his book *THE LORD'S PRAYER . . . EXPLAINED IN THE LIGHT OF THE DAY OF THE LORD* (1876).

² Unless otherwise described, original editions have been followed. In revisions, as issued subsequently, by the translators or others, the several

in heuene; ȝyue to vs this dai oure breed ouer othir substaunce; and forȝyue to vs oure dettis, as we forȝyuen to oure dettouris; and lede vs not in to temptacioun, but delyuere vs fro yuel. Amen.

FORSHALL AND MADDEN.

2. In MS. of 14th Century.

Fader oure that art in heuene, halwed be thi name: come thi kyngdom: fulfild be thi wil in heuene as in erthe: oure ech day bred ȝef vs to day, and forȝeue vs oure dettes as we forȝeue to oure detoures: and ne led vs nouȝ in temptacion, bote deliuere vs of euel. So be it.

MASKELL'S *Monumenta Ritualia*.

3. The Prymer in English, about 1410.

Oure fadir, that art in heuenes, halewid be thi name: thy rewme come to thee: be thi wille do as in heuene and in erthe: oure eche daies breed ȝyue us to day: and forȝyue us oure dettis, as and we forȝeuen to oure dettouris: and ne lede us into temptacioun: but delyuere us fro yuel. So be it.

MASKELL, *op. cit.*

4. WILLIAM TINDALE, 1525 (or 1526).

O oure father which arte in heven, halowed be thy name. Let thy kyngdō come. Thy wyll be fulfilled, as well in erth as hit ys in heven. Geve vs this daye oure dayly breade. And forgeve vs oure treaspases, evē as we forgeve thē which treaspas vs. Leede vs not into temptacion, but delyvre vs ffrom yvell. Amen.

versions exhibit changes of reading, spelling, and punctuation; and in some instances the doxology has been added to versions that were formerly without it.

In the revised edition of Tindale, issued in 1534, the petition for forgiveness ends: "as we forgeve oure trespassers." See Nos. 6, 8, and 9.

5. MYLES COVERDALE, 1535.

O oure father which art in heauen, halowed be thy name. Thy kyngdome come. Thy wyll be fulfilled vpon earth as it is in heauen. Geue vs this daye oure dayly bred. And forgeue vs oure dettes, as we also forgeue oure detters. And lede vs not in to tēptacion: but delyuer vs from euell. For thyne is the kyngdome, and the power, and the glorie for euer. Amen.

6. The Prymer of 1538—English and Latin (Paris).

Our father whiche art in heuen, halowed be thy name. Let thy kyngdome cum vnto vs. Thy wyll be fulfilled as well in erthe, as it is in heuen. Gyue vs this daye our daylye breade. And forgyue vs our trespasses, as we forgyue them that trespas agaynst vs. And lede vs nat in to temptacyon. But delyuer vs from euyll. So be it.

Note "trespasses . . . trespas against us." See Nos. 4, 8, and 9.

7. The Great Bible, 1539.

Oure father which art in heauen, halowed be thy name. Let thy kingdome come. Thy will be fulfilled, as well in erth, as it is in heuen. Geue vs this daye oure dayly bred. And forgeue vs oure dettes, as we forgeue oure detters. And leade vs not into temptation: but delyuer vs from euyll. For thyne is the kyngdom and the power, and the glorie for euer. Amen.

8. The Primer of HENRY VIII., 1545.

Our father whiche art in heauen, halowed be thy name. Thy kyngdome come. Thy will be dooen in yearth, as it is in heauen. Geue vs this dai our daily breade. And forgeue vs our trespaces, as we forgeue them that trespass against vs. And let vs not bee led into temptacion, But deliuer vs from euill. Amen.

In this form, the petition as to the Father's will (DONE, and not "fulfilled") takes us back to Wycliffe (No. 1, see also No. 3); and that with reference to forgiveness, "them that trespass against vs," follows the Prymer of 1538 (No. 6). Both features reappear in No. 9.

9. First Prayer Book of EDWARD VI. (1549).

Oure father whiche arte in heauen, hallowed be thy name. Thy kyngdom come. Thy wyll be done in earth as it is in heauen. Geue vs this daye oure dayly bread. And forgeue vs oure trespasses, as we forgeue them that trespassse agaynst vs. And leade vs not into temptacion. But deliuer vs from euell. Amen.

See notes on Nos. 4, 6, and 8. Apart from details of orthography and punctuation, this form has been perpetuated to our day in the Book of Common Prayer.

10. Geneva Version, 1557.

Our father which art in heauē, halowed be thy name. Let thy kingdome come. Thy wyl be done euen in earth, as it is in heauen. Geue vs thys day our dayly bread. And forgeue vs our debtes, euen as we forgiue our debtors. And lead vs not into tentacion, but deliuer vs from euil.

11. The Bishops' Bible, 1568.

O our father, which art in heauen, halowed be thy name. Let thy kyngdome come. Thy wyll be done, as well in earth, as it is in heauen. Geue vs this day our dayly breade. And forgeue vs our dettes, as we forgeue our detters. And leade vs not into temptation, but delyuer vs from euyll. For thyne is the kyngdome, and the power, and the glory, for euer. Amen.

12. Rheims Version, 1582.

Ovr Father which art in heauen, fanctified be thy name. Let thy Kingdom come. Thy wil be done, as in heauen, in earth also. Giue vs to day our supersubstantial bread. And forgiue vs our dettes, as we also forgiue our detters. And leade vs not into tentation. But deliuer vs from euil. Amen.

13. Authorised Version, 1611.

Our father which art in heauen, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heauen. Giue vs this day our daily bread. And forgiue vs our debts, as we forgiue our debtors. And lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for euer. Amen.

14. Revised Version, 1881.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread [MARG.: Gr. *our bread for the coming day*]. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our

debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil *one* (MARG.: Or, *evil*).¹

The American Standard Edition, 1901, agrees with the Revised Version in every particular, except that it exhibits the marginal rendering of the petition for bread with the extension —“Or, *our needful bread*.”

A Fourteenth-Century Expansion.

(MS. in Brit. Mus., formerly belonging to the Abbey of Sempringham.)

Oure Fader that art in heuenes, and in alle holy men: hallewed be thi name in us, so that we be holy in thi name: come thi kyngdom vntill us, so that we tharunto come: 3ef us to do thi wille in erthe, als thin halwes it don in euene: 3eue us to dai and eueri dai al that we to mister haue: and for3if us oure misdedes, als we for3euen hem that us misdou: and lat us nou3t be fonded of sinne, bot thu 3if us thor 3ein to standen: deliure us out of this wikke werlde: and tak us to thi self into heuene. Amen.

MASKELL, *op. cit.*

* * * Other versions in Camden's REMAINES (1605), and in Maskell's MONUMENTA RITUALIA ECCLESIAE ANGLICANÆ (second ed. 1882), and sources there indicated.

¹ In the Revised Version, 1881, the doxology is given in the margin. In the Book of Common Prayer, as at present, it is sometimes included, at other times excluded. *Included*: in Morning and Evening Service when the Prayer is used after the Absolution, also in the Post-Communion Office. *Excluded*: in Morning and Evening Service when the Prayer is used after the Creed, also in the opening of the Ante-Communion Office. In the other services of the Church of England the doxology is generally omitted.

V. METRICAL FORMS¹1. NICHOLAS BREAKSPEARE (Pope Adrian IV.),
1160.

Ure fadyr in heaven rich :
 Thy name be halyed everlich :
 Thou bring vs thy michell bliffe,
 As hit in heaven y-doe,
 Evar in yearth beene it also :
 That holy bread that lasteth ay,
 Thou fend it ous this ilke day.
 Forgive ous all that we havith don,
 As wee forgivet vch other mon :
 Ne let ous fall into no founding,
 Ac sheild ous fra the fowle thing. Amen.

CAMDEN'S *Remaines* (1605).

2. The Time of King HENRY III. (died 1272).

Fader that art in heavin bliffe,
 Thin helge nam it wurth the bliffe
 Cumen & mot thi kingdom,
 Thin holy will it be all don,
 In heaven and in erdh also,
 So it shall bin full well Ic tro.
 Gif vs all bread on this day,
 And forgif vs vre finnes,
 As we do vre wider winnes :
 Let vs not in fonding fall,
 O ac fro evill thu fyld vs all. Amen.

CAMDEN'S *Remaines* (1605).

¹ Spelling and punctuation as in the works and editions specified. In later editions, and as received through other channels, there are many variations.

3. Old Metrical Version.

Our father which in heauen art,
 lord hallowd be thy name,
 Thy kingdō come, thy will be don
 in earth, euen as the fame
 in heauē is. Geue vs (O Lord)
 our dayly bread this day:
 As we forgeue our detters fo,
 Forgeue oure dettes we pray.
 Into temptatiō lead vs not,
 From euill make vs free
 for kingdome, power and glory thyne,
 Bothe now and euer be.

STERNHOLD AND HOPKINS (1562).

4. HENRY LOK.

Ovr Father which in heauen art, Lord halowed be
 thy name.
 Thy kingdome come: thy will be done, in heauen
 and earth the fame:
 Giue vs this day our daily bread: our trespaffes
 forgiue,
 As we for other mens offence, do freely pardon giue:
 Into temptation leade vs not, but liuer vs from ill.
 For thine all kingdome, glory, powre, is now and
 euer will.

Ecclesiastes, otherwise called The Preacher (1597).

5 and 6. New Metrical Version.

(1)

Our Father, who in Heaven art
 thy Name be hallow'd in each Heart:
 Thy Kingdom come; may we fulfil,
 who dwell on Earth, thy Heav'nly Will,

With equal Cheerfulness and Love,
 as Saints and Angels do above.
 Give us this day our daily Bread;
 Us into no Temptation lead;
 But with thy Grace preserve us still
 From Sin, and every Thing that's Ill.
 For thine the Kingdom, and the Pow'r
 And Glory are for evermore.

(2)

Our Father, who in Heaven art,
 all hallow'd be thy name;
 Thy Kingdom come; thy Will be done,
 throughout this earthly Frame,
 As cheerfully as 'tis by those
 Who dwell with Thee on high;
 Lord, let thy Bounty day by day
 our daily Food supply;
 As we forgive our Enemies,
 thy Pardon, Lord, we crave;
 Into Temptation lead us not,
 but us from Evil save.
 For Kingdom, Pow'r and Glory all
 belong, O Lord, to Thee;
 Thine from Eternity they were,
 and Thine shall ever be.

BRADY AND TATE (1703).

7 and 8. GEORGE WITHER.

(1)

*Our Father which in heaven art;
 We sanctifie thy Name:
 Thy Kingdome come: Thy will be done
 In heav'n and earth the same:*

Giue vs this day our Daily bread :
And vs Forgiue thou so ;
As we on them that vs offend
Forgiuenesse doe bestow :
Into Temptation lead vs not ;
But vs from euill free.
For, thine the Kingdome, powre, and praise,
Is, and shall euer be.
Hymnes and Songs of the Chvrch (1623).

(2)

Our Father, who in Heaven doth reside ;
 Thy Name, *for evermore*, be sanctif'd,
 Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will on earth be done
 Even as it is in Heaven, *by every one*.
 This present day, with daily bread relieve us ;
 As others we forgive, our sins forgive us.
 And when thou ledest us into temptation,
 From Evil, then, vouchsafe us preservation.
 For, thine, the Kingdom, Power, and Glory be
 For ever ; *and belong to none but thee.*
Meditations upon the Lords Prayer (1665).

9. JOHN BUNYAN.

(A "Country Rhime for Children.")

Our Father which in Heaven art ;
 Thy name be always hallowed ;
 Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done ;
 Thy Heav'nly path be followed.
 By us on Earth as 'tis with thee,
 We humbly pray ;
 And let our Bread us given be
 From day to day.

Forgive our debts, as we forgive
Those that to us indebted are:
Into temptation lead us not;
But save us from the wicked's Snare.

The Kingdom's thine, the Power too,
We thee adore,
The Glory also shall be thine
For evermore.

Book for Boys and Girls (1686).

10. ADONIRAM JUDSON.

(Written while imprisoned at Ava in 1825.)

Our Father God, who art in heaven
All hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come; thy will be done,
In earth and heaven the same.

Give us, this day, our daily bread;
And, as we those forgive
Who sin against us, so may we
Forgiving grace receive.

Into temptation lead us not;
From evil set us free;
The kingdom, power, and glory, Lord,
Ever belong to Thee.

Life by WAYLAND (1853).

* * * Other versions in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*
(revised ed. 1907), and sources there indicated.

APPENDIX II

“VAIN REPETITIONS”: NOTES ON *BATTOLOGEŌ*¹

Illustrative Compositions—The Word Defined.

WHEN dealing with the “Vain Repetitions” and “Much Speaking” denounced by our Lord, we have given particulars of a form of “piling up words” that has prevailed among the Jews from very early times. While making no reflection upon such a method of literary composition when applied to prophetic scriptures or songs of praise, we cannot but see that for the purposes of prayer it was altogether unsuited, and calculated to yield a result that is mechanical and lifeless. Hence we maintain that our Lord was dealing with this form of devotion when He said *μὴ βαττολογήσητε*, “use not vain repetitions” (*Matt. vi. 7*).

The word employed to express the practice thus denounced is *βαττολογέω* (or *βατταλογέω*); but what that word means in its detail has been the subject of much dispute. The first demand is for a

¹ Dealt with in some measure in Chapter IV.

sound etymology: with that secured, we shall pass on to a correct definition, or reliable meaning of the word.

On the surface, one notes that the word is a compound, the familiar Greek word *logeō*, to speak, being combined with another word, or form of speech, of disputed derivation. The former part of the word has been generally regarded as recalling the name of a king, named *Battos*, who stuttered; or (as others say) of a silly poet who made hymns full of repetition. One remarks immediately, that if a king stuttered, there was already a term wherewith to describe the act; and, moreover, that, as there have ever been loquacious poets, the type stood in no need of a *personal* designation. The word has also been explained as meaning to stammer, or babble; but this sense is virtually contradicted in the context, where the *battologising* is explained to imply "much speaking" (*polulogia*). A stuttering performance is, assuredly, *little* speaking!

Illustrative Compositions.

In view of the notes of lexicographers and commentators on the word, it is sufficient to remark that the expression is distinct from those used in Ecclus. vii. 14, "prate not . . . repeat not"; also that in its earliest occurrence, here in Matthew's Gospel, it is not necessarily synonymous with *battarizō*, to stammer, and its derivatives, which are neither found in the Septuagint nor in the Greek New Testament. Seeing that the context in which *battologeō* occurs is JEWISH, it is of prime importance to consider the word in the light of Hebrew literary practices and liturgical customs. Hence, in the text we have propounded an explana-

tion based on the alphabetical acrostic as a characteristic of Jewish prayer-forms.

By way of further explaining a practice which, as we hold, was denounced by the Great Teacher when He first gave the Prayer, we reproduce a prayer-poem constructed on the plan of two clauses for every letter of the alphabet—a composition taken from the Evening Service of the Day of Atonement:

(*Aleph*) Thou knowest the mysteries of the heart ; (*aleph*) to Thee alone belong both revealed and secret things.

(*Beth*) We come with words wherewith to crave Thy favour ; (*beth*) heed not our wickedness nor our wrongful acts.

(*Gimel*) We approach Thee this day as one who feareth and hath dread ; (*gimel*) exalted and merciful, for Thine own sake render mercy.

(*Daleth*) Deal not strict justice with dust and ashes ; (*daleth*) know that our end is the worm.

(*Hê*) If we have erred, and the sin is veiled from us ; (*hê*) art not Thou alone He who perceiveth faults ?

(*Vau*) So regard us not as one acting arrogantly ; (*vau*) but in an acceptable time receive the confession of our lips.

(*Zayin*) At this time pardon us, whether our sins be known to us or unknown ; (*zayin*) whether committed arrogantly or in ignorance, in relation to positive or negative commands.

(*Cheth*) Deliver us from the punishment of excision and of death ; (*cheth*) have compassion upon the clay which Thy hands have made.

(*Teth*) We have acted foolishly through the evil inclination which hath been with us from youth ; (*teth*) concealed within us like a snare for our steps.

(*Yod*) O Thou who hast formed and made us—Thou knowest our frailty ; (*yod*) let Thy compassion be moved, and destroy not,

- (*Caph*) For who can be hidden from Thy presence? (*caph*) all things are open to Thee, even as the light and noonday.
- (*Lamed*) To the House of Judgment Thou hast committed the four death penalties; (*lamed*) for Thine own sake deliver us therefrom.
- (*Mem*) From the time when Thou didst fashion us, Thou hast searched and known; (*mem*) our deeds, for they have been perverse and evil.
- (*Nun*) Preserve our souls, for in Thy hand is every soul; (*nun*) we beseech Thee spare the soul of such as afflict the soul before Thee.
- (*Samech*) The penalties of stoning, burning, beheading, and strangling; (*samech*) the reason for these Thou hast revealed to such as know Thy truth.
- (*Ayin*) For all our transgressions pardon us, O God; (*ayin*) for those that are known to us and also those that are concealed from us.
- (*Pê*) We have made confession of our transgressions before Thee, O Searcher of hearts; (*pê*) redeem us from sin and purify us from iniquity.
- (*Tzaddi*) O Thou Rock, look not in judgment upon man who is as grass; (*tzaddi*) deal with us in righteousness as to every living creature.
- (*Koph*) We have hastened to come to Thee, we have approached Thee with supplication; (*koph*) draw us near unto Thee, hearken to our cry.
- (*Resh*) Look not upon our wickedness, but have compassion upon us, that we may be justified; (*resh*) may Thy compassions come to us, Thou who art compassionate and gracious.
- (*Shin*) Thy Name from of old has been He who passeth by transgression; (*shin*) give ear unto our cry now that we stand before Thee in prayer.
- (*Tau*) Pass by the transgression of Thy people as they turn from transgression; (*tau*) blot out our trespasses from before Thine eyes.

A further specimen may be given—a prayer taken from the Service for the Morning of the First Day of the New Year Festival :

READER.	CONGREGATION.
<i>Aleph</i> : Thou art our God	<i>Beth</i> : in heaven and upon earth.
<i>Gimel</i> : Mighty and terrible,	<i>Daleth</i> : the chief among ten thousand.
<i>Hè</i> : He spake and it was :	<i>Vau</i> : and commanded and it was created.
<i>Zayin</i> : His memorial is for ever,	<i>Cheth</i> : He liveth throughout the ages.
<i>Teth</i> : He is pure of eyes :	<i>Yod</i> : He dwelleth in secret.
<i>Caph</i> : His crown is salvation :	<i>Lamed</i> : His garment is righteousness.
<i>Mem</i> : His robe is zeal,	<i>Nun</i> : He is girt with vengeance.
<i>Samech</i> : His secret is uprightness :	<i>Ayin</i> : His counsel is faithfulness.
<i>Pè</i> : His work is truth :	<i>Tzaddi</i> : He is righteous and upright.
	CONGREGATION AND READER.
<i>Koph</i> : He is nigh unto them that call upon Him in truth :	<i>Resh</i> : He is high and exalted.
<i>Shin</i> : He abideth in the skies :	<i>Tau</i> : He hangeth the earth upon nothing.

The Word Defined.

With these additional excerpts from the liturgy of Israel before us, we have concrete specimens of *battologising*. Hence the suggestion here made that the Greek word used in Matt. vi. 7 expresses a system of speaking alphabetically, with words, clauses, sentences,

or still larger forms of utterance, opening with or otherwise exhibiting the letters of the alphabet in regular order—speaking from *Beth* to *Tav* (or *Tau*). This view derives support from the etymology once in favour, that the former part of the word reproduces the Hebrew בִּטָּא or בִּטָּאָה (*bättā* or *bättāh*), to use many words, as in swearing or incantation (cf. Lev. v. 4). The confounding of surds and aspirates, whereby, in the Hebrew word just given, *tav* is represented by *teth*, should cause no difficulty, for there are many instances of such confusion. It is, moreover, significant that, in giving the Prayer, our Lord said: “After this manner THEREFORE pray ye,” as if to emphasise the ALEPH character of the OUR FATHER—*ABINU*—in contradistinction to the *battologising* of the Synagogue prayers.

In a word, our definition of *battologeō* is “to speak from *Beth* to *Tav*” (or *Tau*), corresponding to “much speaking” (*polulogia*), as was the custom in the prayers of the Synagogue. Obviously, the word exemplifies the “sound-play” that has ever been prevalent in Hebrew speech. Whatever the term may have come to signify subsequently, we trace it to its origin in the jargon or “Yiddish” of Palestine, whereby, as modern languages have also done, the prevalent Greek speech received from the Jewish population a sprinkling of Hebrew and Aramaic terms. Here is one such form, onomatopoetic in character, compounded with a good Greek word, *logeō*; but the result is “Yiddish,” and designed to describe a practice in prayer which has persisted to the present day. The “speaking” was the popular praying; and this was from *Beth* to *Tau*, or on an alphabetical method, therefore all round and exhaustive!¹

¹ Such a treatment of letter-sounds is by no means exceptional. The English word *Abecedarian*, “one who teaches the alphabet,” is an illustra-

Worship that was thus rendered became mechanical, and came to be regarded as an end in itself. In a word, it was essentially a lip business and so quite unsuitable for prayer. Hence the Divine rebuke through the prophet: "This people draw nigh unto Me, and with their mouth and with their lips do honour Me; but have removed their heart far from Me," words that were endorsed by our Lord Himself (Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8, 9; Mark vii. 6, 7).

It is worthy of note that the context of the Lord's Prayer, as found in Matthew's Gospel, exhibits other such traces of "Yiddish"—words of Hebrew or Aramaic origin in Greek letter and form, in some instances brought under the laws of Greek accident by being given case-endings, *e.g.* *Amen* ("verily") in chaps. v. and vi.; *Raca*, *Moreh*, and *Gehenna* in chap. v. 22; *Mammon* in chap. vi. 24; and there is an allusion to the "jot and tittle" of the Hebrew character in chap. v. 18. Taken together, the facts indicate very plainly that the Sermon on the Mount was given in the language of the Jewish people, and not in the Greek form that we now possess in the Gospel.

Whatever may have been the vehicle of common speech, doubtless Aramaic, we cannot conceive that the Lord would give the Prayer itself in any tongue other than the Hebrew in which worship was conducted in Temple and Synagogue. The word *Battologeō* is

tion of the practice; as also is the word *jot*, "a trifle," from the Latin *iota*=Greek *iota*=Heb. *yod*, the smallest letter of the Sacred Alphabet (see Matt. v. 18). Moreover, in Greek and Latin alike, currency was given to words compounded of the first two letters, also bringing in *iota*, the smallest letter. Note, further, among Hebrew words of an artificial order, *Athbash* (from *aleph*, *thav*, *beth*, *shin*), which describes a cryptograph system based on permutation of letters (examples in Jer. xxv. 26, li. 1; see R.V. *marg.*).

consistent with this view, as also is the significant fact that the "Fountain" Prayer which was given to supersede the *Beth-to-Tau* devotions was one in *Aleph*—ABINU, "Our Father." Thus we see that, while writing to the larger world, and giving the Prayer in the Greek language, the Evangelist has nevertheless afforded us welcome glimpses of the Semitic surroundings in which the Galilean Rabbi gave the Sermon and the Prayer.

APPENDIX III

“OUR DAILY BREAD”: NOTES ON *EPIOUSIOS*¹

Introductory—Early Explanations—Confusion and Speculation
—The Language of Worship in Israel—“Bread of our Sustenance”
—Jerome’s Reading, *Mahar*—Conclusion.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

The petition for bread demands careful attention, with special reference to the word rendered “daily” in the Authorised Version. There is little need to rehearse at length the various views that have prevailed as to the word in dispute, *ἐπιούσιος* (*epiousios*). The commentaries and Bible dictionaries present opinions in conflicting array, and for the most part no claim is made that one or the other view furnishes a convincing solution of the problem.

We set forth in this volume the results of study pursued from an original point of departure, with a readjustment of old facts and the introduction of new facts; and we proceed to present a conclusion which (as we believe) is not only original, but commended to attention on grounds that have hitherto been overlooked or neglected.

¹ Dealt with in some measure in Chapter XI.

It is well, at the outset, to recognise that *epiousios* has no place in classical Greek literature: all occurrences in ecclesiastical writings depend upon the appearing of the word in the Lord's Prayer. The various speculations as to the meaning of the word are based, either on such derivation as individual scholars have favoured, or on such a sense as the context has seemed to demand. Tradition has done much for some words, but for *epiousios* it has done nothing of any value. Hence, from the earliest age of the Church, widely divergent views have prevailed.

II. Early Explanations.

These may be indicated in brief, in order that the case may be exhibited with clearness.

(1) In the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" assigned to the second century, the interpretation, according to Jerome (fourth century), was "belonging to to-morrow," *i.e.* future, or coming bread. Jerome declares that in the Gospel named he found the word *Muḥar* [מחר] "to-morrow": there is no other early witness to such reading, though certain Egyptian versions—Coptic, Thebaic, and Memphitic—of a later time present renderings that are agreeable thereto.

Some critics have endeavoured to show that the Greek word *epiousios* may bear the meaning "to-morrow," but the contention has failed to carry conviction. For one thing, and to this we call special attention, no modern translator of the New Testament into Hebrew, representing a desire to reach the very words used by our Lord in the prayer-language of the Jewish people, has been able to include the word *Maḥar* in his rendering of the petition.

As a fact quite apart from criticism, moreover, it is worthy of remark that the idea of prayer for "the morrow's bread" is positively excluded in the light of our Lord's teaching in connection with the very Sermon on the Mount in which the

Prayer was first given: "leave the morrow to take thought of itself" (Matt. vi. 34).¹

(2) In the Old Latin Version (African), belonging to the same period, the sense given is "daily"—*quotidianus*; and some have endeavoured to find this sense in *epiousios*, though not in recent times. Yet, as is well known, this rendering has had a wide influence, "being the parent of the familiar 'daily' in all the Churches of the West to the present day."²

In this case also we note that translators of the New Testament into Hebrew are provided with no workable suggestion; and thus, at least in modern times, they have been unable to embody the idea of "daily" in a Hebrew form of the petition.

(3) The Oriental Versions represent another view. The Old Syriac (Curetonian) reads *lachman amino*—"our continual bread"; and the Peshitta Syriac, *lachmo d'sunqonan*—"the bread of our need"—our necessary bread. The former rendering is apparently of a speculative order; the latter, implying the necessities of life, comes nearer to a reasonable interpretation of *epiousios*.

From these, again, belonging (as received by us) to the fifth century, modern translators of the New Testament into Hebrew have derived little or no real help.

(4) The Greek commentators Chrysostom (fourth century) and Theophylact (eleventh century) present a view which found much favour until recently. The former regarded *epiousios* as meaning that which is "convenient for our *substance* (*οὐσία*, *i.e.* existence) for the daily support of life"; the latter understood the clause to speak of "bread which is

¹ It is doubtless true, as affirmed in the *Didachē* (chap. viii.), that it was customary in early times to say the Prayer three times a day: but assuredly it is by no means likely that, with such persistent frequency, the obvious teaching of Matt. vi. 34 would be disregarded by early followers of Christ.

² Principal J. B. M'Clellan, in *Expository Times*, vol. ii. (1890-91) p. 185. In *THE FOUR GOSPELS* (1875) the same writer says: "Is it conceivable that in this inimitably concise and sublime prayer there could have been perpetrated so diffuse and mean a tautology as this: '*Our bread which is daily, give us daily*'?" (p. 645).

sufficient for our *substance* (οὐσία, *i.e.* existence) or subsistence" (συστάσις).

At back of this view lies that of the sustenance of life by means of food, which has not received the attention it deserves. Translators of the New Testament into Hebrew seem not to have given due consideration to this explanation.

The early explanations need not detain us longer. If "daily" is logically excluded (as a weak redundancy) by the opening words of the petition, "Give us THIS DAY," so, assuredly, "to-morrow" is rendered unacceptable by the PLAIN TEACHING of our Lord when giving the Prayer (Matt. vi. 34).

Before proceeding further, however, we ask whether Jerome's observation as to *Mahar* occupies, as a critical fact, ground that is sufficiently secure to warrant primary and unhesitating consideration in the treatment of *epiousios*. In other words, we ask, May not Jerome have handed on a MISTAKEN READING of "the Gospel according to the Hebrews"? We shall deal with this question in section VI.

III. Confusion and Speculation.

Thus we see that, in the early centuries of our era, a number of views, more or less plausible, were in manifest conflict, yet all of them professing to explain (or take the place of) the epithet of the bread in this petition. As there seemed to be no likelihood of the philological enigma being solved, recourse was had, on the part of some, to *spiritual* (or, rather *unnatural*) applications of the clause. Origen, for instance, advanced the theory that *epiousios* meant "bread proper to the future world," though given to-day in anticipation; and Jerome, in his Vulgate, while retaining the "daily" (*quotidianus*) of the Old Latin in Luke's

Gospel, gave in Matthew the interpretation "super-substantial bread" (*panis supersubstantialis*), as if to say, bread that is above all substances, excellent, spiritual, from heaven.

In this last sense many of the Fathers understood the word; in fact, they seem to have persuaded themselves that, in the most practical line of the Prayer, as men view things, the first disciples among the Jews were instructed in the deepest and most mystical doctrines of the Faith as the same had come to be apprehended by non-Jewish and Western minds! Not only have some contended for an allusion to "the bread of life" in the highest or deepest sense of the words, but others have found a Eucharistic significance—although the Lord's Supper had not been instituted, and a day-by-day realisation of the death of Christ was out of the question. Such views have no contact with interpretation in the true sense of the word.

On the other hand, in face of the confusion to which reference has already been made, there emerged the theory that the word has been "coined," either by our Lord or the Evangelists. If, as we hold, the Prayer was originally given in Hebrew, there can be no ground for suggesting that our Lord "coined" the Greek word. At the same time, it is unthinkable that the Evangelists should do such a thing. How could they, as reasonable men, not to say faithful exponents of the Master's teaching, give a word of uncertain meaning in their version of a Prayer that was designed to supersede forms which, though dear to the Jewish heart, were being set aside mainly because of their unreality and tendency to promote insincerity in the worship of God? No; the Evangelists had a conscience above such trifling. Remembering that the

word occurs in both versions of the Prayer, *i.e.* as recorded in Luke as well as in Matthew, we must look in another direction for a solution of the riddle.

Differences of view in regard to *epiousios* have led scholars to set forth distinctive derivations of the word. On the one hand, with *Maḥar* in mind, some have connected *epiousios* with *ἔναι* (to go), through *ἐπιών* and *ἐπιούσα*, and have given the word a *temporal* meaning—to-morrow, the coming time, and so forth. On the other hand, such as have not been dominated by Jerome's reading, have connected the word with *εἶναι* (to be), as a compound of *ἐπί* and *οὐσία*, and have given it a *qualitative* meaning—bringing in the idea of sustenance, physical subsistence, essential life, and so forth, as applied to the "bread." Of late there has been little disposition to consider this latter point of view. Yet there is more to be said for it than appears at first sight.

Though not classical, the word before us demands to be taken seriously. Both Matthew and Luke give it, as if they found themselves shut up to its use in the work of rendering a Hebrew term into Greek which, as it were, would bear a clear and definite significance. There is, we contend, no obvious reason for bringing in the sense of time; rather, it is manifest that the adjective *describes* the bread in some practical relation. If possible, we must get behind the petition as it has come to us, to the Hebrew in which it was originally given; and then we shall find a form of words that will not only illumine the Greek text, but at the same time throw some light upon Jerome's statement as to the reading found in "the Gospel according to the Hebrews."

Meantime, may we not ask whether our difficulty

to-day has not arisen in some measure from the fact that, in the case of *epiousios*, we are dealing with TRANSLATION Greek—a feature which possibly would raise no question in the minds of those to whom the Gospel records came in the first instance?

IV. The Language of Worship in Israel.

In a way, the question as to the language spoken by our Lord in His public ministry is raised by the problem which is now before us. Suffice it to remark that, while Aramaic was the popular form of speech, certainly in Galilee, and a modernised Hebrew (or a purer Aramaic dialect) may have prevailed in Judæa, there can be no doubt that HEBREW was the language of worship, as it has been ever since among the Jewish people.¹ While Targums were employed to explain lessons, no such measure was required in regard to the prayers, for the Jew had these, at least those most frequently used—with Benedictions or Graces—on his very tongue; and they were in the HEBREW language. This is made clear from the comparative fewness of the Aramaic (otherwise Chaldaic) prayers that have been handed down to us in the ritual of the Synagogue.

Accordingly, the Lord's Prayer would be given in Hebrew—not in common speech, but in that which was held in national reverence. The acrostic prayers—going from *Beth* to *Tau*—which our Lord denounced, were in Hebrew, and we must conclude that the Prayer in *Aleph*, which He gave in substitution, was in the

¹ See the books of reference; also Schürer's *JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST*, div. 2, vol. i. pp. 9, 10; Neubauer's essay, *THE DIALECTS OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST* (*Studia Biblica*, vol. i.); and Franz Delitzsch's essay, *ON THE HEBREW NEW TESTAMENT* (Leipzig, 1883).

same language.¹ If the Regular Prayers were in Hebrew, the "Fountain" Prayer must likewise be so. Had things been otherwise, there would assuredly have been some intimation of the fact; for although it was permissible for Jews to pray in any tongue, it was systematic to pray in Hebrew, which was the language of ALL ISRAEL. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that our Lord gave His Prayer, not in some local dialect, but in the language in which the people read "Moses and the Prophets," in a tongue which, quite naturally, commanded the love and devotion of the men whom He gathered round Him as disciples. We have found the opening petitions to be made up of Old Testament terms; and we have no reason to expect any change of principle in regard to that for bread.

These things being so, it is highly significant (as already hinted) that modern translators of the Prayer into Hebrew have felt themselves compelled to leave on one side the temporal meanings suggested for *epiousios*. Surely if these meanings—either for "to-day" or "to-morrow"—represented with fidelity the thought which our Lord expressed in Hebrew, there ought to be little difficulty in laying hands upon the very word or form of words which came from the mouth of the Great Teacher, and which prompted the use of *epiousios* by the Evangelists who turned the Prayer into Greek. But it is obvious that the translators into Hebrew down to our own day have found little or no guidance, and the word *epiousios* has

¹ See p. 39 f., *ante*. In Appendix V. we shall see that, though spoken in Hebrew, the Prayer received an Aramaic name in the very generation in which it was given. In like manner to-day, stately Hebrew prayers are designated by common Yiddish names in familiar conversation among Jews (p. 262 ff., *infra*).

retained its secret throughout the generations. Manifestly, then, if we are to solve the problem before us, we must, in the first instance, assume a petition in Hebrew which has the terseness and clearness of the other clauses of the Prayer, and likewise possesses the rhythm and graceful balance which characterise Jewish forms of worship. If by such means we can reach the basal Hebrew petition, then we shall find some light to be shed upon the Greek rendering which has been given us by the Evangelists, and which has hitherto caused so much perplexity.

How shall we proceed to realise that assumption? Certain it is that the tendency to find in *epiousios* a reference to TIME has yielded nothing for this purpose. Out of seven versions in Hebrew, now before us, five have given a "rendering" which can by no means be regarded as a translation, namely, לֶחֶם חֲקֵנֵנו (*leḥem ḥuqēnū*), "bread of our portion," our prescribed or allotted bread.¹ Why have they thus represented the petition? Not because any such idea is acknowledged to be found in the Greek word, but rather because a similar form of expression occurs in Prov. xxx. 8 ("food that is needful," "bread of my portion" —R.V.). If this procedure means anything, it is that the translators into Hebrew felt compelled to ignore *epiousios*! In the absence of clear suggestion from the Greek Gospels, they went afar for a form of words that should at least be intelligible to the Jewish mind!

And yet the word *epiousios* is not disposed of by

¹ The five are: Salkinson-Ginsburg, Franz Delitzsch, Moses Margoliouth, Greenfield, and Fry-Collyer. Other renderings are: Hutter-Robertson, *laḥmēnu d'var yōm*, "our bread, a matter (or portion) of a day"; see Ex. xvi. 4 *et al.*; London Jews Society's version, *leḥem tzorkēnu*, "the bread of our need," see 2 Chron. ii. 15 (16). See list of editions, p. 213, *ante*.

being thus set aside. It represents to-day, as it has ever represented, the Evangelists' interpretation of the petition as given by our Lord, and it demands treatment that shall be at once true to the text and philologically just.

V. "Bread of our Sustenance."

In our present studies it became necessary, up to a point, to follow the example set by the several translators into Hebrew, and for a moment to turn our face away from *epiousios*. At the same time, we had no alternative but to cut adrift from positions, in regard to the word itself, which, though maintained with the command of vast erudition, have avowedly proved unfruitful in their issue. We proceeded to desiderate a form of words—in Hebrew, of course—which should be at once in harmony with the Prayer as a whole and true to Jewish thought and practice. In particular, we examined with care the Prayers for Sustenance and Graces at Meat that have been on the lips of the Jewish people from early times. After a while—and after labour which, again and again, yielded disappointment—our investigations were rewarded, and we found ourselves face to face with a Hebrew form of words which in a surprising way answered to our quest.

We sought a Hebrew petition that might help us to an understanding of the Greek petition. We sought a form of words in the Holy Tongue that would be intelligible to the first disciples, in the hope that, by reflected light, we might reach an end of difficulty in regard to the much-debated epithet of the bread as it has come to us in the Greek of the Gospel narratives. The Hebrew form which we found was לֶחֶם מִחַיֵּינוּ—

lehem miḥyathēnū, "bread of our sustenance." We laid these simple Hebrew words over the perplexing Greek text; and after a careful examination of the one and the other, we saw in *epiousios* more than ever we were able to find before! And our observations did not stay there, as section VI. will show.

The terms of the petition, as thus "restored," are soon explained. The word *lehem* is the ordinary term for bread, and occurs nearly three hundred times in the Old Testament; and it is daily on the lips of Jews in "Graces before Meat." As to the other word, *miḥyah*, it is derived from *ḥāyah*, to live, and means *the preservation of life* (as in Gen. xlv. 5, "preserve life," and 2 Chron. xiv. 12, "recover themselves") or *that which sustains life* (as in Judg. vi. 4, "sustenance," and vii. 10, "victuals"). This word has its proper place in Prayers for the Necessaries of Life, also in Graces at Meat, as these have been uttered by the Jews for many generations. Before meat the Jew thanks God for bringing forth BREAD (*lehem*) from the earth; and afterwards he praises Him for SUSTENANCE and nourishment (*'al ham-miḥyah v'e'al hak-kalkālāh*). In a Prayer for Sustenance, he eulogises God because He dispenses SUSTENANCE (*miḥyah*) with a bountiful hand.¹ Many words were at disposal wherewith to describe food supply, but none are so clear-cut in their significance as to the substance (bread—*lehem*) and the object (sustenance—*miḥyah*).² Combined in a manner idiomatic of Hebrew, the words are singularly expressive; and the ideas are fundamental. In fact,

¹ See Vallentine's JEWISH RITUAL, vol. xii. p. 316 ff. and p. 89. Also in Continental Service-Books.

² The vocabulary of such terms is epitomised in Gen. xlv. In v. 5 there is *miḥyah* ("preserve life"); in v. 11, *kilkel* ("nourish"); and in v. 23, *lehem u-māzōn* ("bread and meat").

they are on the tongue of the observant Jew repeatedly every day, in all circumstances of life, from youth to old age.

Thus we come to realise that the Great Teacher embodied in the petition before us words that were both simple and attractive. He used a form of expression which enshrines the majestic conception—which should enrich the minds of men in East and West alike—that God gives bread for the sustenance of human life. Hence in its complete form the petition would read :

אֶת לֶחֶם מַחֲיָתֵנוּ הֵן לָנוּ הַיּוֹם :

"The bread of our sustenance, give us this day."
Or, in fuller form, the petition may have read :

אֶת לֶחֶמֵנוּ לֶחֶם מַחֲיָתֵנוּ הֵן לָנוּ הַיּוֹם :

"Our bread, the bread of our sustenance, give us," etc.

Either form would be good Hebrew, and suggest a reasonable explanation of *epiousios*.¹

"*The bread of our sustenance.*" Here we have an expressive idiom. An adjectival idea is conveyed by the use of two substantives; as in many Old Testament passages, *e.g.* "the courts of My holiness," "the arm of My strength," and others.² In all such cases

¹ Other possible Hebrew forms, bringing in כֹּהֵן (for reasons yet to appear), are given on p. 213, *ante*.

² Here are some instances of the idiom: Deut. i. 41, "the weapons of his war"—his military weapons; Isa. ii. 20, "the idols of his silver"—his silver idols; Isa. lxii. 8, 9, "the arm of his strength . . . the courts of my holiness"—his strong arm . . . my holy courts; Isa. lxix. 18, "the people of thy holiness"—thy holy people. Among occurrences in which no attempt is made, either in the A.V. or the R.V., to resolve the idiom, see Isa. ix. 3 (4), "the yoke of his burden, the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor," signifying vassalage, subservience, and oppression, brought to bear from without. The idiom is registered in GESENIUS-KAUTZSCH HEB. GRAM., ed. Cowley, second edition, sec. 135 n. (p. 440).

the possessive pronoun is connected with the second substantive, which, as we should say, is in the genitive case. Accordingly, in the petition as thus framed, the word "sustenance" qualifies the bread as to its object or purpose; and hence, quite obviously, "the bread of our sustenance" in Oriental phraseology answers to "OUR SUSTAINING BREAD" in Western form of expression.

This characteristic Hebrew idiom, though frequently met with in the Pauline Epistles,¹ is not a feature of the Gospels—certainly not of the first and third, which now engage us. A glance at the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament shows an intelligent treatment of the idiom in many places, though in others the translators were content to transfer it.² The Evangelists, on the other hand, were careful NOT to transfer the idiom, but to avail themselves of such Greek adjectives as might best express the idea intended. Accordingly, we find, both in Matthew and Luke, a rendering of the petition for bread in which the idiom is duly RESOLVED. To both these exponents of our Lord's teaching, "the bread of our sustenance" (לֶחֶם מַחֲיָתֵנוּ) meant "our sustaining bread," the bread for the preservation of life, THE BREAD ON WHICH WE EXIST—τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον.

If the original Hebrew of the petition was in such words as we have suggested, then the meaning of *epiousios* is placed beyond reasonable doubt. The word was an adjective formed from a derivative of the verb of existence, with a prepositional prefix.³ Hence

¹ See e.g. Eph. i. 14, 19; Col. i. 13, 20, 22.

² e.g. 2 Chron. xxx. 27; Isa. ii. 20, lxiii. 15; Ezek. xxxii. 27; and note in particular Isa. ix. 3.

³ That derivative was doubtless οὐσία (from εἶμι), which was used in the sense of τὸ εἶναι, being, essence, existence. Hence (though indirectly) ἐπιούσιος came from ἐπειμι (ἐπεῖναι), to be upon, or exist upon. Cf. ἐπινοέω,

its signification, EXISTING UPON, that is, SUSTAINING, as describing the bread named in the petition. The mystery that has enveloped the word originated, not so much in its derivation as in its application in the clause—to what did it allude, what was its precise relation to the bread? It was in circumstances of confusion that, proceeding from the simple to the complex, scholars sought a root relation in *εἶμι* (*ibo*) rather than in *εἶμι* (*sum*), but without decisive result.¹ At length, senses of *time* and *fitness* have proved utterly unavailing for the purposes of interpretation; but now, in the light of Hebrew usage, a harmonious explanation is at hand.

VI. Jerome's Reading, "Maḥar."

With מִיָּחַתְנֻ (miḥyathēnū) before us, we recall the reading handed down by Jerome (sec. II. sub-sec. 1). That distinguished Father says that, in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, he found the word *Maḥar*. He is silent as to the construction of the petition in the Gospel named: he does not tell us whether *Maḥar* was at the beginning, middle, or end of the clause; nor, indeed, whether any particle or prefix was employed to bring it into definite relation to the word *leḥem* (bread). For the most part, critics have

to think upon; ἐπιβλέπω, to look upon; ἐπιτρέφω, to feed upon; and many more such combinations. The suggestion that ἐπιούσιος (*masc.*) originated in ἡ ἐπιούσα, *scil.* ἡμέρα (*fem.*), has only become tolerable through constant repetition, in the absence of a more reasonable explanation. If the adjective qualifies the bread (*masc.*), as is obvious, then how can there be a *feminine* reference, as suggested?

¹ For a useful discussion of philological details, see Tholuck's SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Eng. tr., 1860); Lightfoot's volume, ON A FRESH REVISION OF THE ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT, second edition, 1872; M'Clellan's FOUR GOSPELS, 1875; and Cremer's BIBLISCH-THEOLOGISCHES WÖRTERBUCH, 9th ed., 1902 (or Eng. tr. of earlier edition).

accepted his testimony without troubling themselves with these considerations, which, however, cannot be entirely left on one side. Jerome's words are:

"In Evangelio quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos, pro supersubstantiali pane reperi Maħar, quod dicitur crastinum, ut sit sensus: Panem nostrum crastinum, id est futurum, da nobis hodie."

On this, Bishop Chase, in his learned essay, observes: "Here, it will be noted, Jerome does not profess to give us the precise words of the whole clause. He is content to quote the single word *Maħar*, and then adds his own conclusion as to the general meaning (*ut sit sensus*). It seems impossible that the two words *to-morrow* and *to-day* could have stood side by side in the clause, and Jerome disguises the contradiction lurking in his fusion of quotation and comment by the gloss which he slips in (*crastinum, id est futurum*)."¹

It cannot be said that, presented in such a manner, the reading *Maħar* comes to us in a very intelligible form. Was Jerome satisfied with it? In Luke he gives us *panem quotidianum*, in Matthew *panem supersubstantialem*; and he seems not to have expressed a wish that either of these should be displaced by *panem crastinum*. In the circumstances, we do Jerome no injustice when we suggest that, in the document which he saw, the word *Maħar* (or what he judged to be *Maħar*) followed *lehem*. True, this makes indifferent Hebrew; but had Jerome seen a clear and strong phrase, he would doubtless have reproduced it.

Further, we hazard the judgment that the reading passed on by Jerome is faulty, and therefore misleading. The case which we have endeavoured to

¹ THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH, pp. 52, 53.

present, for a petition in which (in Hebrew) the word מַחִיתָנוּ followed לָהֶם, may afford some explanation of how the mistake originated. We proceed to indicate circumstances in which the word *Maḥar* could creep into the Hebrew Gospel which Jerome saw. Consider—

(1) The word מַחִיתָנוּ following the word לָהֶם, as we have seen, may have come on the left-hand fringe of the document, and through injury the letters תָּנוּ may have been lost. In that case מַחִי (*māḥi*) would remain, and if roughly written, these letters might easily be read מַחַר (*māḥr*).

(2) The word מַחִיתָנוּ may have been written negligently, with the letters ill-spaced, thus מַחִי תָנוּ. In that case מַחִי might be misread as מַחַר, and the remaining letters תָנוּ (possibly damaged) be taken as תֵּן ("give"); in which case the imperative תֵּן ("give") that followed, would be regarded as a repetition, by way of error.

(3) The word מַחִיתָנוּ may have been divided at the end of a line, as was often done, in ancient Hebrew as well as Greek,¹ with מַחִי ending one line, and תָנוּ beginning the next. In this case also, מַחִי might be misread as מַחַר, and תָנוּ (on the following line) might be confused, by error, with the imperative תֵּן ("give").²

Needless to say, such a misreading as was possible with Jerome, was equally possible with any copyist predecessor. In other words, a copyist may have perpetrated the error, along one or other such lines as

¹ See GESENIUS-KAUTZSCH *HEB. GRAM.*, ed. Cowley, 2nd ed., p. 27, note 4; Driver's *NOTES ON HEB. TEXT OF BOOKS OF SAMUEL*, 2nd ed., *Introd.*; Perles' *ANALEKTEN ZUR TEXTKRITIK DES ALT. TEST.* (1895), ch. 2; *Amer. Journ. Semitic Languages*, vol. xiv. (1897-98) p. 47.

² Any one of these suggestions, in which the presence of מַחִיתָנוּ is presumed in the text, would have equal force if, as a fact, the reading was לחמנו לחם, לחמנו לחם, or לחם לחמנו, or other such combination. Moreover, the Hebrew could likewise present subject and predicate in the same order as in the Greek text (see p. 213, *ante*).

those suggested, and have actually introduced the word מחר into the document which was seen by Jerome. He may also have "rectified" (by deletion) the repetition of תן which he might think he found in the latter part of מִחִיתָנוּ.

If, in reality, the mistake was made by Jerome, and not by some copyist before him, then some excuse may be found in the fact that the Father suffered from weak eyes.¹ Moreover, from his rendering of the petition, as it appears in Luke xi., we infer that Jerome was prepared to find a word with a TEMPORAL meaning at back of *epiousios*. It remains to add, by way of further explanation, that the Hebrew characters were substantially the same in the Apostolic age as in later centuries; already the *yod* was the smallest letter, and virtually its present shape (Matt. v. 15); and therefore if written carelessly, it might easily be mistaken for an imperfect *resh*. And so מחי would be read מחר.

It is admitted that the misreading now suggested, whether perpetrated by Jerome or some one before him, implies a somewhat exceptional confusion of Hebrew letters; but in that particular those who have studied the *variæ lectiones* given in such profusion by Kennicott and De Rossi will be disposed to say, "nothing is impossible." Moreover, if the Hebrew letters were frequently misread (as we know to have been the case) in documents produced with scrupulous care by scribes working under strict regulations, how much more would this be possible (indeed likely) in a work like an early Gospel, which we may well believe belonged to quite another class of writing, and laid no claim to artistic execution—being simply a copy of an unpopular memoir?

¹ Dean Fremantle, in Murray's DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY, p. 471.

Further, we must not forget that, among Hebrews as well as other people, writers had individual characteristics such as might easily lead to misreading. An illustration of this is afforded by Ginsburg's description of Bible manuscripts even though executed under Massoretic scrutiny;¹ the Pentateuch MS., Oriental 4445, being shown to have several peculiarities, one of which (for example) exhibits the letter *yod* with an extended shaft which, quite naturally, would render it easy to confound it with the letter *resh*. Practical observation shows something like this in all forms of writing.

Accordingly, on the grounds set forth, we maintain that the "reading" which stands to the name of Jerome was a MISREADING. That certain Egyptian versions accepted it, giving renderings favourable to "the morrow's bread" or future bread, seems to show that the reading thus exposed commanded considerable attention in early times.

In the light of the suggestion now made (sec. V.), that the petition, as originally given, read *lehem miḥyathēnū*, we present two simple inferences: first, that the puzzle-word *epiousios* is adequately explained; and second, that the Jerome "reading"—which has been a factor of perplexity from the first—may reasonably be regarded as discharged.

Moreover, we remark that, should our case with reference to *Mahar* be sustained, then it follows that Jerome saw a Hebrew Gospel as we understand the word, and not an Aramaic translation. In the latter dialect, the imperative "give" would be הב , from הָב , and not תן from תַּן , which Hebrew word our investigations have demanded, at this stage with striking results. Again, the fact that Jerome presents the word he found

¹ Ginsburg, INTRODUCTION TO HEBREW BIBLE, p. 469 ff.

as *Maḥar*, and not *M'har*, points in the same direction, being only consistent with an allusion to HEBREW [מַחַר] as distinguished from Aramaic [מְחַר].¹

VII. Conclusion.

Thus the word *epiousios* comes under a new light—a light to which it makes a ready response. From a Hebrew point of departure we examine the word afresh; and we find it to be a severely literal translation of a Jewish conception, *that which sustains*, and therefore **THAT ON WHICH WE EXIST**. The bread for which we pray is the common thing, the staff of life: “our bread”—*ton arton hēmōn*; “that on which we exist”—*ton epiousion*. The adjective declares the quality or character of the bread—it is *sustaining*. The Early Fathers, as we have seen, disowned the word:² possibly they looked for something more refined, more stylistic, as Greek; perhaps, moreover, they were not expecting to find a word which, on its very surface, would proclaim its character as the *translation* of some Hebrew idea.

Yet, as we have already shown, in the course of the centuries, the qualitative meaning of *epiousios* has found influential support. Is it not significant that Christian commentators who were Greeks by birth (sec. II. subsec. 4) derived the word from *οὐσία*, and explained the petition as dealing with bread for the sustenance

¹ The editor of Jerome's works in Migne's *PATROLOGIÆ* says that two MSS. read *Moar* and others *Maar*, which fact must be held to strengthen the case for which we now contend.

² Origen said the word was unknown in his time: he spoke so far as he knew. Jerome made a similar limiting statement in regard to *apokalupsis*; but he was wide of the mark. See Trench, *SYNONYMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT* (seventh edition, 1871, p. 333, sec. 94); also Deissmann, *LIGHT FROM THE ANCIENT EAST*, pp. 72, 73, note.

and support of life? The particulars may be found in the works of reference, including the *Lexicon* of Suidas (ed. Gaisford and Bernhardt, 1853); and Sophocles, in his *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (1893), gives the derivation as from *οὐσία*, and defines the sense as "necessary to existence."¹

Three positions that have been maintained with special confidence demand brief notice:

(1) Some have shown a readiness to find an explanation of the word in the giving of the manna, as described in Ex. xvi., and for the most part the meaning thence derived has been "daily." But the conclusion is unjustified on the ground of fact. The record shows that the manna was given on six days of the week only; none was given on the Sabbath (*vv.* 25, 26). Thus the provision of the manna constitutes an unsuitable figure wherewith to define the bread as "daily." But with the Israelites, as we know, the giving of the manna had quite another meaning: it was "bread of the mighty," "bread from heaven" (*v.* 4; Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25, cv. 40; cf. John vi. 31, 32). Therefore, had our Lord desired to describe the daily provision in terms of the manna, it would more likely have been in order to emphasise a *quality* than a temporal relation.

(2) The theory that the petition was for "the morrow's bread" also demands a further remark. In

¹ See also Stephen, *THESAURUS* (ed. Hase-Dindorf, 1835), and Schleusner, *LEXICON* (1819). Cremer suggested "what belongs to existence." Modern lexicographers, however, giving undue weight to the Jerome "reading," have failed to render justice to the qualitative point of view. It is worthy of note, by the way, that, in the American Standard edition (1901) of the REVISED VERSION, there is a twofold marginal reading, thus: "Gr. *our bread for the coming day.* Or, *our needful bread.*"

support of that view, it has been contended that the Prayer was originally designed for use at eventide, in which case "the morrow" would be in mind. This suggestion, however, is not in harmony with conceptions which prevailed among the first disciples. With the Jews, as we know, the day began at eventide. If, at that hour, variable according to the seasons, the disciple said, "Give us this day," etc.—then he was thinking of a day already begun. Again, if, on awaking in the morning, he said, "Give us this day," then he was occupied with a day already half gone. Further, if at noon he said, "Give us this day," then he asked with reference to a day that was swiftly passing away. Thus, though praying morning, noon, and night (as was his custom), the Jew never concentrated upon "to-morrow." One day concluded when the other began—at eventide. Therefore (in addition to being opposed to Matt. vi. 34), *to ask to-day for to-morrow's bread involved a contradiction of the regular order of things*: in other words, evening prayer suggested TO-DAY, not to-morrow. "Evening, morning, and noonday" was the order (Ps. lv. 17, refs.).

(3) The positive statement that *epiousios* cannot have a relation to the substantive verb, also demands notice. The opinion takes some such form as this: "Only one derivation is possible, and that is, from the participial stem of the verb ἐπιέναι, to go, or come on. If dependent on ἐπεῖναι, to be upon, the word would be ἐπούσιος," (with *iota* gone). So it has been contended. In the nature of things such a point cannot be discussed at length in this work. And there is no need, for Tholuck and Cremer¹ have shown that the

¹ See works named on p. 245, *ante*, note; also Winer's GRAM. OF NEW TEST. GREEK, ed. Moulton (ninth English edition, 1882), p. 120.

opinion is not final. Though ἐπί, when prefixed to words beginning with a vowel, usually loses its *iota*, still there are instances where it is retained, e.g. ἐπιετής, this year, ἐπιорκεῖν, to swear falsely, and others. If, however, the word is regarded as formed of ἐπί and οὐσία, as the Greek expositors held to be the case, difficulty vanishes. Then we find ἐπιούσιος and περιούσιος to be correlatives, alike in form and meaning. The latter implies *being*, or *existing*, BEYOND (i.e. superfluity, hence "treasure"); the former *being*, or *existing*, UPON (i.e. sustenance, hence "life support").

It is suggested that our present study confirms the relation of *epiousios* to the substantive verb through οὐσία. There is, moreover, this to add: When bringing words to strict philological rules there is a danger of overlooking facts that should be borne in mind. We have come to find in the New Testament traces (and more) of *common* Greek. May we not then conclude that the word before us—bald though expressive—belonged to the class which was in the minds of the early enemies of the Faith when they uttered the taunt that Christianity was promulgated in "fisherman's style," as distinguished from that of polished Greek writers?¹ Anyhow, we see that *epiousios* becomes

¹ "*Piscatorius sermo . . . piscatorio artificio.*" See Norden's *DIE ANTIKE KUNSTPROSA*, vol. ii. p. 514; and Deissmann's *LIGHT FROM THE ANCIENT EAST*, p. 65. In a study of the word *epiousios*, contributed to *NEUTESTAMENTLICHE STUDIEN*, "offered to Georg Heinrici on his seventieth birthday, by colleagues, friends, and pupils" (Leipzig, 1914), Deissmann deals with two of the contentions which we have endeavoured to meet. On the theory that the word was coined to express "the morrow's bread," he says: "Why should the Evangelists coin a new word? They might assuredly have said τὸν ἄρον ἡμῶν τὸν εἰς τὴν αὔριον. That they used the word *epiousion* is most simply explained if the adjective already existed in the people's language." In conclusion, Deissmann maintains that "*the Evangelists used a people's word already in existence.*"

intelligible immediately when placed alongside *miḥyah*, and, moreover, it forthwith becomes free from its former features of perplexity.

It is indeed remarkable that so serious a difficulty should have been encountered in words of the New Testament which, from the first, have been most familiar, and all down the ages have been most frequently repeated by followers of Christ. We are not called upon to account for the fact; but it is not without grounds of reason that we suggest a cause as found in the early lack of sympathy with Jewish ideas, and a consequent hesitation, on the part of Gentile Christians, to investigate terms and examine institutions in the light of Hebrew origins and associations. Such a condition of things may in some measure explain the confusion which, so early in the history of the Church, gathered round the word *epiousios*, with subsequent misdirection and disappointment.

Be that as it may, the time seemed ripe for renewed research, in the hope of a fresh point of view yielding a more convincing result. Accordingly, we introduce into the Hebrew form of the petition a reading which not only throws light upon *epiousios*, but at the same time enables us to deal afresh with the observation handed on by Jerome. Our investigations were not undertaken with Jerome in mind, but with the object of reaching the Hebrew form of the Prayer. Afterwards the facts as developed asserted their own relation and influence.

Some years ago Nestle registered thirteen suggested Semitic equivalents of the word *epiousios*.¹ Now, with

¹ The *Expository Times*, vol. xxi. p. 43 (Oct. 1909); also *DICTIONARY OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPELS*, vol. ii. p. 59.

all deference, a fourteenth is advanced as the outcome of prolonged labour along independent lines. This "equivalent," in unexceptionable Hebrew, finds its translational response in the Greek word *epiousios*, and (approximately) its critical vindication in Jerome's perplexing reading, *Mahar*; while ancient writers and celebrated lexicographers may be quoted in support of the *qualitative* rendering of the Greek word as thus demanded. Hence, we propound a "Semitic equivalent" which Nestle has not lived to examine, but which is submitted to New Testament scholars with confidence that it will receive the consideration which it deserves.

APPENDIX IV

“OUR DEBTS . . . OUR DEBTORS”: NOTES ON “THE LORD’S RELEASE”¹

Release=Forgiveness—A Token of Divine Pardon.

A CAREFUL study of Deut. xv. 1–11 points the conclusion that the aim of the legislation there set forth was to obviate helpless poverty in Israel. There seems to have been no intention to interfere with commerce in the ordinary sense of the word; rather, the object of legislative consideration was the poor man who had received from his neighbour a loan wherewith to “pull through” a time of stress. Of such a loan, in ordinary circumstances, repayment would be expected; but should the Sabbatical year come round and the debt still remain, then there must be no demand for payment: “the Lord’s release is proclaimed.” The obligation, large or small, is remitted, not on any principle of business, but simply on the principle of social privilege and religious duty, at the command of the God of Israel, who is the sole source of all material wealth and spiritual blessing (*vv.* 4, 6).

¹ Dealt with in some measure in Chapter XII.

The petition for forgiveness comes with a new force when studied in the light of "the Lord's Release." As we now see, our Lord put into the mouth of His disciples words which entirely carried their minds and hearts: they knew from common experience what they said when uttering the words, "*as we also have forgiven our debtors.*" Assuredly, men in their own circle had come under an obligation to them, with honourable intentions of paying again; but time went by, and the Sabbatical year arrived, during which the land lay fallow, and the resources of the poor were taxed to their uttermost. Then, as a matter of course, the debt which had not been paid, had to be remitted. The lender said "Remitted"; and if not only able to sustain the loss, but nobly disposed, he would, as we must believe, say the word with brotherly joy. From that moment there was no obligation: religious charity (by command of the Lord) had dissolved such difference as subsisted between borrower and lender. Thus it was possible, *at the end of the Sabbatical year* (v. 1), for the poor and weak, as well as the well-to-do Israelite, to resume life's work without the burden of debt.¹ There was "a time for everything" in Israel, even a time to forgive debtors, not as an act of kindness merely, but as a duty. The Hebrew terms are:—שָׁמַט (*shāmat*), to remit, and שְׁמִטָּה (*sh'mittah*), remission.

¹ There is debate among scholars as to whether the *sh'mittah* implies perfect release or merely the postponement of payment. The unsophisticated reader of Deut. xv. has, however, the support of Jewish tradition in the view that such debts as the legislation contemplated were completely renounced by the creditor. On the *sh'mittah*, from various points of view see article "The Sabbatical Year" in the JEWISH ENCYCLOPÆDIA, vol. x. p. 606 ff.; also instructive notes by Rabbi Felsenthal and Professor Goodspeed, in the *Old Testament Student* (predecessor of the *Biblical World*), vol. iii. (1883-84) pp. 148, 153.

Release = Forgiveness.

It is significant that the "Release" (verb and substantive) of Deut. xv. is expressed in the Septuagint translation by the word rendered "forgive" in the Lord's Prayer, and by its derivatives as we find them rendered "forgiveness" and "remission" in the New Testament generally. Thus, *shāmat* (verb) and *sh'mittah* (substantive) are represented by ἀφίημι and ἄφεσις respectively. Then, again, in v. 2 of the chapter specified, the Septuagint introduces the verb ὀφείλω to express the "indebtedness" of the neighbour; and forms of this word likewise appear in the Prayer for "debts" and "indebtedness." Whence it is clear that the ideas of "the Lord's Release" are also the ideas of the Prayer in the teaching of Christ.

In the old time, as we infer, loans were remitted in order that freeborn Israelites might not come under a sordid bondage. In like manner, children of God are encouraged to seek forgiveness in order that, as heirs to a great inheritance, they may stand erect, "holy and without blemish and unreprouvable before Him." DEBTS REMITTED; iniquities forgiven, sins pardoned; and these NEVER AGAIN TO COME INTO REMEMBRANCE. Here we have "the Lord's Release" up-to-date in the Christian dispensation. The thing that was implied in the petition was a thing that was actually done from time to time in the experience of the Jewish people. Hence, if, as is true, our sins separate between us and God, then, most assuredly, the forgiveness of our sins, as sought and granted day by day, will confirm us in the Divine favour, and make it possible for us to enjoy to the full the blessings that come from the reconciling work of Christ.

In the light of the beneficent institution thus described, the petition for forgiveness may be expressed in Hebrew as follows :

שְׁמַטְנָא אֶת־חֻבוֹתֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר נָם אֲנַחְנוּ הָיִינוּ עֹשִׂים שְׁמַטָּה :

"Release us from our debts, as we also have made release." To "make release" is, in reality, to release, or forgive, "them that are indebted to us." As, however, these latter words, apparently redundant, are EXPRESSED in the Greek of Matthew's Gospel, the petition as just given in Hebrew may be extended by some such words as these :

לְאֲשֶׁר הָיוּ חַיְבִים לָנוּ :

—"to them who were indebted to us."

The substance of the whole is "Release us from our debts, even as we also were in the habit of making release to those who were indebted to us."

We suggest with confidence that "the Lord's Release" in the Mosaic economy was a foreshadowing of Divine pardon as the same is brought to view in the Lord's Prayer. The disciples asked for forgiveness, even as they had been under the necessity of extending it. They extended it by command of the Lord—as a religious duty, *i.e.* for the Lord's sake. That is the sense in which the institution was called "the Lord's Release." They were taught to ask daily for a blessing which, so to speak, they already knew in terms of years.

A Token of Divine Pardon.

Other versions in Hebrew express "forgive" by the use of סָלַח (*sālakh*) ; but in the Old Testament this word is confined to the pardoning mercy of God, and therefore is hardly available for the petition, the second

clause of which, in a specific manner, takes account of man's clemency—"as we forgive," etc. As to the word מַחֵל, which others approve, it is, equally with סָלַח and כָּפַר (*kaphar*—to atone), in frequent use in Jewish prayers, particularly in the service for the Fast of Atonement, where we find (1) סָלַח לָנוּ, (2) מַחֵל לָנוּ, and (3) כָּפַר לָנוּ—"forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement." The first of these verbs is in relation to *sins*, the second to *iniquities*, the third to *transgressions*. Delitzsch, accepting the word מַחֵל, rendered the petition as follows:

מַחֵל-לָנוּ עַל חַבּוֹתֵינוּ בְּאִשֶּׁר מַחֵלָנוּ נַם-אֲנַחְנוּ לְחַיֵּינוּ:

Though expressive, this rendering lacks the light which comes from the national institution which we have described.

In the light of "the Lord's Release" another difficulty is solved. The best-approved reading of the indicative verb in Matthew is ἀφήκαμεν (first aorist), as distinguished from the present tense ἀφίεμεν of Luke's version. The question has been asked, "Why aorist?" The institution to which we call attention answers the question. In fact, both verbal forms are justified. The disciples might say, in the sense given in Luke, "as we forgive," meaning *as we, Jews, are in the habit of forgiving*; and with equal truth they might say, in the words of Matthew, "as we FORGAVE," meaning *as we, disciples, were in the habit of doing when still following the demands of the Mosaic Law*.

That aorist tense of the verb, moreover, has another message. Among other things, it answers straight-away the criticism that there is "Legalism" in the Prayer. For what does it say?—"AS WE FORGAVE," *i.e.* as we were accustomed to forgive WHEN STILL

FOLLOWING THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE LAW, as in days past. As followers of Christ, however, these men were hereby taught that the *Sh'mittah* was "fulfilled" in the teaching of their Master. "The Law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

The "debts" of Matthew are "sins" in Luke: the atmosphere of Luke knows less of concrete Judaism. In this light, more intensely moral, the petition comes to most of us to-day. And we have the present privilege of making request in the first clause, "Release us," and exercising a compassion like that expressed in the second clause, "as we release." Though not able, as were the Jewish people, to appeal to a historic national adumbration of mercy, we may yet fall back upon a Divine demonstration of grace which leaves nothing to be desired; and so, reversing the order, we may love because we have been loved; we may forgive because we have been forgiven; we may be "kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave" us (see Matt. xviii. 21-35; Mark xi. 25, 26; Eph. iv. 32; Col. iii. 13).

APPENDIX V

THE PRAYER IN THE EARLY CHURCH : NOTES ON “*ABBA*, FATHER”¹

“Crying” *Abba*=*Praying* “Father”—“The Prayer beginning with ‘Father’.”

IT has long been the custom in the East to designate books and writings by their opening words, or some distinguishing word in the first clause. This mode of reference and quotation is, in fact, as old as the literature of ancient Assyria. Accordingly, individual books of the Pentateuch are named in such a way as this: *Bereshith* (“In the beginning”), for Genesis; and *Bemidhar* (“in the wilderness”), for Numbers. As with the books, so also with smaller divisions, *e.g.*, the *parashah* (or section) of Genesis beginning at ch. xxv. 19 is called *Toledoth* (“generations”), and that beginning at Ex. xxi. 1 is called *Mishpatim* (“judgments”). And so with hymns and prayers, as found in the Jewish liturgy to-day. It is important, however, to recognise that a composition may be designated by one of its characteristic words, presented in the most simple (*i.e.* uninflected) form. Thus, the section Gen. xxii. 1–19

¹ Dealt with in some measure in Chapter XV.

is styled *Aqēdah*, "Binding," because it tells the story of the binding of Isaac on the altar of sacrifice (see v. 9); and the section Ex. xvi. 4-36 is called *Ha-Mān*, "Manna," because describing the raining of "bread from heaven" (see v. 31).

This custom of the East has made its way Westward. Hence, among well-known sacred compositions which have been named after their first words are—the *Benedictus*, the *Magnificat*, the *Nunc Dimittis*, and the *Te Deum*. In harmony with this practice documents issued from Rome, and for which a special authority has been claimed, have been designated *Unam Sanctam*, *In Cæna Domini*, and *Ne Temere*—after their opening words. This modern practice is in imitation of, in succession to, one which has prevailed for millenniums in Semitic literature; and in the light of such proceedings it is easy to understand that, in the earliest period of the Church, among believers of Jewish nationality, the Lord's Prayer should have been styled the *Abba*—so named after its first word, *Ab*, expressed in Aramaic, the everyday and common speech of our Lord and His Apostles.

The Aramaic word *Abba* occurs three times in the New Testament—Mark xiv. 36; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6, in such case, as we hold, in connection with prayer. In the first of these passages our Lord is seen at prayer in Gethsemane.¹ "And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee," etc. Thus we learn that the Lord Jesus, on the occasion in question, addressed the Father in a manner similar to that described in John xvii. and elsewhere. With the Master, as well as with the disciples, "Father" is the

¹ In Matt. (xxvi. 39) it is "my Father"; in Luke (xxii. 42), "Father." As usual, Mark gives us the expressive detail.

first word in prayer. In the other passages the circumstances are different; now the disciples are in question, and we learn that (1) having received the spirit of sonship, they are accustomed to cry *Abba*, Father; that (2) the spirit of the Son has entered their hearts, crying *Abba*, Father. Are we to find here words of meaningless mysticism? Shall we not rather, in view of the important place which the Lord's Prayer occupied in early times, assume the words to have a practical bearing and concrete significance? The burden and purpose of the Lord's Prayer was to implant in the hearts of believers that knowledge of THE FATHER which our Lord came forth to make known. How then about the "crying"? What is it to "cry *Abba*"?

"Crying" *Abba* = *Praying* "Father."

The verb "to cry" is a characteristic Biblical expression, found alike in the Old and New Testaments, as descriptive of prayer. In the passages which now engage us, the idea is expressed by *κράζω*, which, in the Septuagint represents קָרָא (*qārā*); in Ps. xxviii. 1, "unto Thee, O Lord, will I CALL"; and in Ps. xxx. 8, "I CRIED unto the Lord." Again, it represents צָעַק (*zā'aq*) in Jer. xi. 11, 12, "They shall CRY unto Me, but I will not hearken; then shall they CRY unto the gods unto whom they offer incense." In the New Testament, moreover, the word has a like meaning, in Matt. ix. 27, xiv. 30, xx. 21, xxvii. 50; Acts vii. 60; while in James v. 4 we read: "The hire of the labourers . . . CRIETH out (*κράζει*), and the cries (*βοαί*) have entered into the ears of the Lord." Quite obviously the word is fitted for the description of PRAYER. Hence we find that, in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, among the high privileges of

believers, the Apostle specifies that of PRAYING TO THE FATHER, though he does so in a manner which is somewhat unfamiliar to Western minds. He calls it "crying," and associates it with "*Abba*." Having seen that it was an ancient custom to designate literary compositions—including prayers, hymns, and confessional statements—by their opening words, we arrive at an explanation of *Abba*. The word stood for the Prayer which in primitive times was used daily—several times a day—by the followers of Christ.

We proceed to observe, however, that in each of the cases under consideration the Aramaic word *Abba* is followed by its equivalent in Greek, as if by way of explanation. The reading in the New Testament is $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha$, $\acute{o}$ $\pi\alpha\tau\acute{\eta}\rho$, as if = "Father, the Father." It is easy to illustrate the practice, *e.g.* "*Amen*, so be it!" "*Hallelujah*, praise the Lord!" Manifestly, all such forms belong to circumstances in which two (or more) languages prevail, as was the case in Palestine and the Levant in the time of Christ and His Apostles. A similar feature is found in the Apocalypse, where (1) the old serpent is called "the devil and *Satan*," and (2) *Abaddon* is interpreted as meaning Apollyon (Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2, ix. 11). In each case the Hebrew is, so to speak, bracketed with its Greek equivalent; similarly, Aramaic and Greek are bracketed in the form $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha$, $\acute{o}$ $\pi\alpha\tau\acute{\eta}\rho$.¹

¹ In ancient times there was no such device as our modern marks of parenthesis (). Instead of this measure we have in the New Testament varied modes of expressing equivalence, *e.g.* "In Hebrew . . . in Greek . . ." (Rev. ix. 11); "which is to say, being interpreted," (John i. 38); "which is, being interpreted," (John i. 41); "that is to say," (Matt. xxvii. 33); "that is," (Acts i. 19). In the case of "*Abba*, Father," where there is no such explanatory link, we may safely assume the marks of parenthesis thus, "*Abba* (Father)."

Though our Lord prayed *Abba* in Gethsemane, and taught *Abba* to His disciples on the Mount, even then there was a manifest difference between the invocation of the Teacher and that of the taught. As we have seen, He used the singular number of the pronoun, they the plural; and that makes all the difference. Whereas, in all three cases in the Greek text, in Mark as well as in the Pauline Epistles, *Abba* and Father are presented as simple equivalents, it seems to have been impossible for the early Aramaic translators so to represent the words. Hence, it is worthy of remark that, in the Peshitta Syriac version (fifth century) a clear distinction is made between Christ's use of *Abba* (as in Mark xiv.) and the use attributed to the disciples when they "cry" to the Father (as in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv.). Could it be that the translator would, without thought, transfer the *Abba* from the Greek text and then proceed to render *πατήρ* in a manner that would result in a mere repetition of *Abba* in the Syriac version? No; while he seems to have seen that, in every case, the word *Abba* designated the Prayer that was offered, he also concluded that the second word, "Father," was presented by way of explanation. Hence, though in each case the Greek reading was *ἀββᾶ, ὁ πατήρ*, the Syriac translator discriminated between the sense in the Gospel and that which is presumed to lie behind the same form of words in the Epistles. In Mark, for instance, he gives us, "Father, My Father," as befitted Christ, who ever prayed in the SINGULAR NUMBER; while in the passages in Romans and Galatians he gives us, "Father, our Father," as befitted the disciples, who were definitely taught to pray in the PLURAL NUMBER.

The Prayer beginning "Father."

It is important to recognise in the expression found in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv. something very different from a meaningless repetition of words. Though Hebrew was the language of Prayer in the time of Christ, as still is the case among the Jews, the Apostle Paul spoke mainly in Greek. Hence, when he used the word *Abba*, he recalled, in popular speech, an historic occasion when the Prayer (beginning with *Ab* in Hebrew) was given; by combining therewith the more familiar *Patēr*, the Apostle effectually brought the original into association with that Greek form which early asserted a predominance among the faithful. In harmony with this, whereas in the New Testament followers of Christ are those who "cry *Abba*," in later times they were those who "offered the prayer beginning with Father." This was even known in circles wherein the Faith of Christ was subject of scoffing, and among those who were ready to persecute the believers. Of this we find proof in a dialogue, written in the style of Lucian "the blasphemer," and in due time included in the works of that Greek satirist. Dating, as is believed, from the time of Julian the Apostate, this work, entitled *Philopatris: or The Learner*, came from the pen of one who, apparently, had been within the pale of the Church, but, having come out, did what he could to throw contempt upon sacred things. Thus he represents one Treiphon, a Christian (after allusions to Christian dogma), as saying: "Let us quit this discourse with the prayer beginning Father"—in other words, with the *πάτερ ἡμῶν*, or *Abba*, which the Christians used.¹

¹ The words of the scoffer are : τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπὸ πατρὸς ἀρξάμενος.

Thus we conclude that, though in giving the Prayer in the Sacred Tongue our Lord might begin, *Abinu shebashāmayim*, "Our Father, which art in heaven," yet, quite naturally, from its initial word, divested of inflection, the Prayer would come to be known as *Ab*, and then in the everyday Aramaic, as *Abba* (Father).¹ Accordingly, having learned the Prayer, the disciples "cried" *Abba*; and henceforth, as we infer from the passages in Romans and Galatians, the word became the common designation of the Prayer in Apostolic times—even as, in later days, similar designations have prevailed, and the Prayer has been known as *Pater* in the Roman Catholic Church, as well as *Paternoster* throughout Western Christendom.² In view of all the facts, therefore, we feel justified in maintaining that the story of the Lord's Prayer in the Early Church is expressed by the one word, "ABBA."

¹ Some have felt disposed to conclude off-hand that Christ broke with the practice of His people, and gave the Prayer in Aramaic, the domestic speech of Galilean Jews. Our investigations have not pointed that way; and therefore, though (from some points of view) attractive as a theory, the opinion of many that Aramaic was the language of the Prayer has had to be surrendered.

² And according to the practice of the rosary in the Roman Communion, the repetition of the *Paternoster* is styled *Patrilologia*, or "saying Father." See Du Cange, GLOSSARIUM MED. ET INF. LATINITATIS.

APPENDIX VI

IGNORANCE AND PREJUDICE¹

Misuse—Misunderstanding.

I. MISUSE of the Prayer.

As is well known, in the Church of Rome, the *Psalter* and *Te Deum* have been modified and parodied in honour of the Blessed Virgin, the word "Lady" (*Domina*) being introduced in cases where we should properly read "Lord" (*Dominus*). Moreover, occasionally, the Lord's Prayer has been made the scaffolding for devotions rendered to "Our Mary which art in Heaven." An English writer, some sixty years ago, suggested that, in like manner, the Orthodox Eastern Church should proceed to an "improvement" of its liturgy, including the Lord's Prayer, so as to express in its devotions the sentiment which accords to Mary a place superior to that of Christ. (See A. Robertson's *R.C. Church in Italy*, pp. 235-238; W. Palmer's *Dissertations on the Orthodox Communion*, p. 249.)

This represents a sad misuse of the Prayer; but other times have witnessed misapplications along other lines:

¹ Dealt with in some measure in Chapter XVII.

(1) The Greek papyri found in Egypt in recent years show that the sacred words were embodied in amulets, designed to protect against disease and witchcraft (Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri*, p. 133).

(2) The lighter literature of the seventeenth century, in days of social change and political commotion, yields a hateful parody, called "The Parliaments Pater Noster," given to a scornful world, with Ten Commandments and Creed, written to match (Ashton's *Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 213-15).

(3) Then there is the story of a Judge in Admiralty taking the wager of a seaman to "say the points of his compass" as well as he (the Judge) could "say his Pater Noster." The seaman won the wager, for he could say the points of the compass backward as well as forward, which was more than the frivolous Judge was able to do with the "Pater Noster" (Ashton, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 122; also Lord Bacon, in his "Apophthegms," Bohn's edition of *Works* (1857), pp. 186, 187).

(4) Chancellor Burnside, D.D., tells of a man who professed to experience a great spiritual change in the course of the Revival in Ireland in 1859. In explaining the change, the man said he was over sixty years of age, and from his infancy had been in the habit of repeating the Lord's Prayer twice every day, and yet he really could not say that he had ever before prayed, or had an intelligent perception of the words of the Prayer! (*The Lord's Prayer and the Church: Letters to the Clergy*, by John Ruskin, D.C.L., p. 148.)

A merely mechanical repetition of the Prayer, as thus exemplified, led to widespread misunderstanding and prejudice. Men hesitated to use words that were

"said over," as it were, "by rote." But as there is no ordinance of Christ that may not be observed in a perfunctory manner, and without due spiritual apprehension, we must admit that such "saying by rote" is no argument against the reverent and devotional use of the Prayer in Christian assemblies. See objection—a typical case—by Henry Ainsworth (died 1623), in Hanbury's *Historical Memorials of the Independents*, vol. i. p. 341.

II. Misunderstanding of the Prayer.

Misunderstanding may be traced to several causes; but it was chiefly owing to (1) a failure to see that the Prayer is an ordinance of the Gospel; and (2) a failure to recognise that, to the form, substance, and influence of the Prayer we owe all that we know of simplicity and directness in our approach to the Throne of Grace. Such misunderstanding as we have in mind belongs to comparatively recent times, and it seems to express a popular aversion which became acute in the sixteenth century, and was not altogether dispelled by a better judgment which was given forth in the seventeenth century.

The early Dissenters had their difficulties on the point; but Christians of various denominations, who looked for guidance to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, ceased to raise objection. In the *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* (1645) it was enjoined: "Because the Prayer which Christ taught His disciples is not only a pattern of prayer, but itself a most comprehensive prayer, we recommend it also to be used in the prayers of the Church" (see "On Prayer after Sermon"). Following this, many Dissenters used the Prayer generally, and others frequently,

while those who continued to have strong views in an opposite direction were regarded as "not the most judicious" (*Life of Edmund Calamy, D.D.*, 1671-1731, ed. J. T. Rutt, vol. i. p. 158).

These facts notwithstanding, both in England and Scotland, the old objection survived into the eighteenth century, as the following brief records show:

(1) The suggested introduction of the Prayer caused searchings of heart among the General (or Arminian) Baptists of England in the first quarter of the century, and the General Assembly of the denomination, held at Horsham, in May 1724, authorised a letter to the church at Sevenoaks, which "desired to be advised whether it be lawful and expedient to use the form of prayer in the worship of God which our Lord taught His disciples." The answer and advice was in the negative, on the ground that "it does not appear that our Lord designed that form for an exact and standing form of prayer or for the Christian Church to the end of time, but rather for the then present dispensation and state of His disciples." Moreover, a fear was expressed that the adoption of the practice would not tend to peace, but rather would involve "a burden or great scruple in the conscience of many of the members" (*Minutes of the General Assembly of General Baptist Churches in England*, ed. Whitley, 1909, vol. i. p. 143).

(2) In 1726-27, it was related as a fact prejudicial to the celebrated Independent minister, Dr. Philip Doddridge (while still a young man), that he "concluded his prayers with a form called the Lord's Prayer." Dr. S. Clark, who was Doddridge's guardian in youth and his friend in later years, spoke of this as a "stumbling-block," and wrote with feeling: "What a

blot you have brought upon yourself by such offensive practices!" (*Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge*, ed. by Stedman, 1790, pp. 14-16.)

(3) At an Association meeting of Baptists at Exeter in 1756, it was complained that Rev. Philip Gibbs, of Plymouth, was in the habit of "closing his public prayers with that well-known address, 'Our Father.'" The Association took no action in the matter; but the record speaks of the deacon who lodged the complaint as giving "ocular proof" of an ancient fact which the well-known Dr. Samuel Stennett expressed in the words: "God Almighty always has had some silly people!" (Rippon's *Baptist Register*, 1801, vol. iii. pp. 382, 383.)

(4) In his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1773), Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church: "The most learned of the Scottish doctors would now gladly admit a form of prayer, if the people would endure it. The zeal and rage of congregations has its different degrees. In some parishes the Lord's Prayer is suffered: in others it is still rejected as a form; and he that should make it part of his supplications would be suspected of heretical pravity" (*Works*, Nimmo's ed., p. 586; and Croker's ed. of Boswell's *Life*, p. 302).

On the one hand, we see a desire to use the Prayer; on the other hand, a settled prejudice against it. In our day, however, hosts of ministers follow Doddridge, Gibbs, and the Scottish doctors; and there are few objectors. In some measure this may be due to the action of John Wesley, who thus expressed his mind to the early Methodists: "I generally, in public, use the Lord's Prayer, because Christ has taught me when

I pray to say——. I advise every preacher connected with me, whether in England or Scotland, herein to tread in my steps" (*Journal of John Wesley*, 2nd June 1766).

Thus, in a signal degree, the Prayer would seem to have come to its own, at least in English-speaking countries, in connection with the great Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century. Then, with a new sense of filial standing and dependence upon God, there was awakened—and naturally so—a deepened appreciation of that Gospel ordinance which implants in the believer a twofold consciousness: (1) the Fatherhood of God; and (2) the Sonship of those who call upon Him in Christ.

Possibly the fact that the Prayer had (and has) its stated place in the public services of the Church of England, explains, in part, the neglect which it has met with at the hand of non-episcopal communions. In other words, the Prayer has been implicated in controversies, liturgical and otherwise, from which as an undoubted ordinance of Christ it deserved to stand free. Thus it has been prejudged and misjudged; and even to this day it has not been accorded the dispassionate consideration which is its due.

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